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THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

CHAPTER II.

THE ARRESTED BRIDE.

> "Her look composed, and steady eye,
> Bespoke a matchless constancy;
> And there she stood, so calm and pale,
> That, but her breathing did not fail,
> And motion slight of eye and head,
> And of her bosom, warranted
> That neither sense, nor pulse she lacks,
> You might have thought a form of wax
> Carved to the very life, was there;
> So still she was, so pale, so fair." SCOTT.

A rapid drive of an hour's length brought the party to Horsford, the seat of Sir George Bannerman, knight, the magistrate who had issued the warrant.

A winding avenue led from the highway to the hall.

On arriving before the main entrance, the foremost carriage drove up, and the footman sprang down from behind, opened the door and let down the steps, while the policeman got off the box and stood guard.

Mr. Oldfield alighted first, and handed out Estelle, who, pale as death, with her face still wrapped in her bridal veil, mechanically permitted herself to be conducted by her aged friend up the broad marble stairs leading into the hall.

They were preceded by the policeman, who knocked at the door, which was opened by a footman in attendance; while just within, the fat, gouty-looking porter, sat indolently in his arm chair, with gold spectacles on his nose, reading the "Times."

The policeman telegraphed to this dignitary, who, without leaving his seat, or raising his eyes from his paper, answered—

"In the library. Here, John, show this party up."

The footman who had admitted them now came forward, indicated his forehead with his forefinger, by way of obeisance to the lady and the clergymen, beckoned the officer, and lead the way up the broad oaken stairs to a long gallery above, at the extreme end of which was the door of the library, where the preliminary examination was to be conducted. Opening this door the man announced—

"P'lice an' pris'ners y' honor," admitted them, closed the door, and retired.

The party found themselves in a rich, antique, and handsomely furnished library, the walls of which were alternately lighted with stained glass gothic windows, and lined with richly wrought and well filled book cases.

At the upper extremity of this room, behind a long table, covered with a green cloth, sat Sir George Bannerman; on his right hand was his secretary, and near the end of the table, on the same side, were gathered Madame L'Orient, Monsieur Victoire, and a little French Abbe. Near the magistrate stood Lord Dazzleright.

As the venerable clergyman advanced, supporting his fragile charge, Sir George arose, gravely, acknowledged their presence by a slight bow, and sat down again.

The officer preceding the party, laid his warrant before the magistrate, and said—

"Here is the prisoner, your worship," bowed and retired a step or two.

Sir George took up the document, and while he was looking over it in silence, the library door was once more opened, and—

"His lordship the Bishop of Exeter and Lord Montressor to attend the examination," were announced.

They entered gravely, bowed in silence to Sir George Bannerman, who acknowledged their salutation by a momentary lifting of his eyes and a nod, and then took their stand upon the side near Lord Dazzleright.

"Was this *well* done, Sir George Bannerman?" vehemently inquired Mr. Oldfield.

"To what do you allude, sir?" asked the knight, without lifting his glance from the document in his hand.

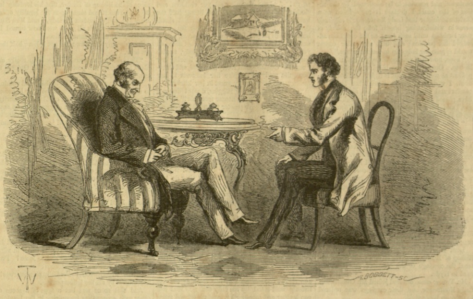
"I allude to the arrest of this lady."

"Reverend sir, one of your excellent judgment should know that the *law*, no more than the *gospel*, is a 'respecter of persons.'"

"Assuredly not, Sir George! but you were in the church at the time this illegal marriage took place; you heard the solemn adjuration of the Lord Bishop officiating, that—if any man there present knew cause why the contracting parties should not be joined in matrimony, he should then and there declare it. Sir, you sat there, with this unhappy lady's husband by your side, and heard this solemn adjuration, and you did not speak! But speedily after the accomplishment of the act, you issued the warrant for the lady's arrest. Sir George Bannerman, I ask you once more, *was* this act, on the part of a Christian, a gentleman, and a magistrate, *well done?*"

"Sir, a distinguished professor of the orthodox principles of human free agency like yourself, should understand that the *law*, no more than the *gospel*, interferes arbitrarily to prevent crime; that it can only judge and punish; but, sir, we lose time; will you have the kindness to stand aside and let me see the prisoner?"

With a deep-drawn sigh, bearing to heaven an earnest prayer, for the despairing one at his side, the good clergyman withdrew a step, and Estelle was left standing unsupported before the green table.



THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN LORD MONTRESSOR AND SIR PARKE MORELLE.

"Madam, will you be kind enough to unveil?" said the magistrate.

Estelle turned aside her veil, revealing a face so deathly in its hue that they who beheld it suddenly blanched in sympathy.

"Your name, Madam, is Estelle L'Orient?"

She bowed assent.

The magistrate then took up the warrant for her arrest, read it aloud to her, replaced it on the table, and addressing her, said,

"Estelle L'Orient, you are herein charged, under oath, by Madame Gabrielle L'Orient, here present, with having this day, at the parish church of Hyde, in and during the life of your husband, Victoire L'Orient, now living in these realms, feloniously intermarried with George Charles, Viscount Montressor, said marriage constituting an act of bigamy, against the peace and dignity of the king's majesty, and punishable by transportation, according to the statute in such case made and provided. What have you to say to this charge?"

"Nothing here, sir;—much perhaps hereafter," answered the deep, plaintive voice of the accused.

"Sir George Bannerman," said Lord Dazzleright, coming to the side of the lady, "I stand here as the counsel of Lady Montressor, if she will accept my services, and I take exception to the question put to her, as improper."

"Madam, do you retain Lord Dazzleright?" demanded the magistrate.

"I do, sir."

"You are then the counsel of Estelle L'Orient?"

"I am the counsel of Lady Montressor."

"*Ah! my lord! do not breathe that stainless name here!* I have no claim to it! Thank God for this, at least—that whatever happens, I can bring no reproach upon that honored name! for it is not mine! I am poor Estelle L'Orient, and yonder man is really my owner," said the thrilling, passionate voice of the lady, as she shuddered and averted her head.

"Hush! hush my child! You must really keep silence, and permit me to conduct this case. I shall deny their charges *ab initio* and *in toto*, as we lawyers say. You are no more the legal wife of yonder vagrant than you are of—— well let that pass! You are the Vicountess Montressor."

"*Oh! no, no, no!* great heaven, no! that sacred name—Lord Montressor's spotless name—must be kept holy from the sorrow and shame that is gathering darkly over that of poor Estelle L'Orient."

While this low and hurried conversation was going on between the counsel and his client, the magistrate sat back in his chair, waiting. Seeing them at length silent, he leaned forward and inquired of the counsel if they were ready to hear the charge.

"We are ready," replied Lord Dazzleright.

"Then I will proceed to call the witnesses—Madame Gabrielle L'Orient will please to take the stand"

The small, deep-set, quick, black eyes of the little old French-woman, scintillated with cunning malignity, as she came forward. The oath was duly administered and she commenced her deposition. First, she identified the accused as Estelle, the wife of Victoire L'Orient; and then in polished French but broken English she testified to having witnessed the marriage of her son, Victoire L'Orient, and her pupil, Estelle Morelle, in the church of St. Etienne, at Paris, on the 13th day of November, 18—: and, farther, to the fact of the said Victoire and Estelle having lived together as man and wife, for the period of one year, under her roof, at No. 31 Rue St. Genevieve, Paris.

While this witness was giving in her evidence, Lord Dazzleright whispered his client,

"If there is any point in her testimony, to which you take exception, let me know it!"

"The marriage was a private one, and unless I was grossly deceived, she knew nothing of it at the time," murmured Estelle, struggling against the death-like despair that threatened the annihilation of her faculties.

"One moment, if you please," said Lord Dazzleright, as the witness was about to retire from her position, "this alleged marriage is understood to have been a strictly private one—how then did it happen, Madame, that you witnessed it?"

"I suspect the children of their intention. I follow, I pursue, I enter the chapel of St. Etienne. I witness the marriage."

No cross questioning could drive the woman from this point; but on the contrary, only tended to consolidate and confirm her in her loose-jointed evidence.

The next witness called was the little old French priest, who, having been duly sworn, first identified the accused, and then testified to have both witnessed and assisted, at the marriage of Estelle Morelle and Victoire L'Orient, which was solemnized on the 13th of November, 18—, by the Abbe Pierre Leroux, in the church of St. Etienne, Paris.

The cross questioning of this witness elicited nothing to throw discredit upon his testimony.

The certificate was then exhibited. And the fact of the first marriage seemed established. The next proceeding was to prove the identity of Victoire L'Orient, as the living husband and consequently as the legal obstacle to the second nuptial. This was easily done by the testimony of the mother and the priest. The next and final fact to establish, on the part of the prosecution, was that of the second and so called felonious marriage, that day celebrated at the parish church of Hyde. This was formally proved by the testimony of the same witnesses.

Then Lord Dazzleright, with a smile of encouragement, stooped and spoke aside to his client,

"Re-assure yourself, Lady Montressor! This was from first to last a series of conspiracies; I shall easily overthrow them with their own weapons; hoist these engineers with their own petard——"

Then turning to the magistrate, his smile of benevolence changed to one of flashing scorn, as he said,—

"We might commence, your worship, by contesting the legality of these proceedings, from the moment of the issuing of the warrant, in itself informal, as not containing the name of the accused which is not Estelle L'Orient, but Estelle, Viscountess Montressor. But we choose to rest our defence, not upon a mere verbal form; but on the deepest and firmest foundations of justice and truth. We shall therefore commence by denying *ab initio* and *in toto* the validity of the alleged marriage, said to have taken place in the chapel of St. Etienne in the city of Paris, showing the same to have been a felonious act, the result of a conspiracy, in which my client was not principal or party, but victim—a crime punishable by the statute laws of France with fine and imprisonment. I shall show that, dating from the edict of the *14th of Henry II*, the statute laws of France forbid the marriage of a minor without the knowledge and consent of her parents or guardians, and vacate such marriage, so contracted, as illegal, invalid, and of none effect."*

It is not our intention to follow the "learned counsel" minutely through all his argument, in which he displayed much zeal, legal lore, ingenuity and tact, and by which he temporarily effected, in the feelings and sentiments of all his hearers, with the exception of the prosecuting party, a powerful revulsion in favor of the accused. He exposed without mercy all the intriguing arts by which this designing French governess and her unprincipled son, had conspired to inveigle their pupil, then a mere child, into a clandestine marriage, by which they hoped eventually to enjoy her immense wealth. He dwelt upon the moral turpitude of that treacherous teacher in having thus betrayed the sacred trust reposed in her by the parents of the child confided to her care. He said that the criminal arts of this intriguing mother and son should avail them nothing, either in shape of profit, or vengeance. And he concluded by concentrating an immense mass of law, testimony and precedence upon the point that this *quasi* marriage into which they had conspired to entrap their pupil, was, without the knowledge and consent of the parents or guardians of the child bride, null, void, invalid, and therefore could not form a legal obstacle to the validity of the real and authorized marriage that day solemnized at the parish church at Hyde. He then required the discharge of his client from custody, and sat down.

Sir George Bannerman acknowledged the conclusion of his argument by a nod, and turned his face towards the witnesses for the prosecution as if to express himself ready to hear anything they might have to advance against this. The prosecuting party had no counsel, but in the absence of a better lawyer, Madame L'Orient proved in her own person, despite her sex and her broken English, an "indifferent good," or at least very shrewd advocate. And it was the shrill voice of the little yellow, shrivelled, and bead-eyed old French-woman, that replied to the polished Lord Dazzleright.

She prayed Monsieur the Magistrate to remind himself that the *statement* that Mademoiselle Estelle Morelle had been married to Monsieur Victoire L'Orient, without the knowledge and consent of her parents, was only an *assumption* which required proof, while on the contrary, the *fact* that this marriage between Monsieur Victoire and Mademoiselle Estelle had been celebrated with the knowledge and consent, and in the presence of Mademoiselle's *guardian*, was already proved, was established, was unquestioned; for that she herself, Madame Gabrielle L'Orient, in her capacity of governess and teacher, had borne the relation of guardian to Mademoiselle Morelle. And as guardian of Mademoiselle, her presence at the marriage of Mademoiselle was all that was needed to make that marriage a legal transaction.

Having given this testimony, the vindictive little woman—her black eyes scintillating in triumph—sat down.

Lord Dazzleright arose and scornfully disclaimed the pretensions of Madame L'Orient, utterly denying that her office of teacher could have invested her, for a moment, with the rights of legal guardianship over her pupil.

Madame replied that she was not only teacher, but sole custodian, governess and guardian of Mademoiselle for many years.

Here commenced a discussion upon this subject, ended at last by the magistrate, whom it was easy to suspect of a leaning on the side of the prosecution, and who now said—

"This particular point is a matter for the adjudication of their lordships the judges at the assizes. Has the defence anything further to urge?"

"Yes—for though you choose to consider the illegality of the first marriage a questionable matter—nay, though you should decide to hold it a legal and binding transaction, yet—we have much to advance, why my client should not be held to answer to the grave charge upon which she stands before your worship. The English law, as also the law of all Christian nations, very righteously constitutes the *intention* the vital part of the crime; now that my client had not the faintest shadow of *intention* or purpose to violate the statute by her second, and as we hold it to be, her *only* real marriage—is easy of proof. Two years ago there was a published account of the death of this man, upon the occasion of the wreck of the *Duc D'Anjou*. This account was translated from the *Courrier de France* into the Daily Times, a copy of which I have just received from Lord Montressor, and have the honor of laying before your worship," said Lord Dazzleright, drawing the paper from his pocket and placing it upon the table before the magistrate, who took it up and read, while the advocate proceeded—

"My client saw this announcement, and believing herself to be the legal widow of this man, retired from society and remained in seclusion some eighteen months; at the end of which time only, she accepted the addresses of Lord Montressor, to whom she was this morning espoused as you have learned."

"But Monsieur the Magistrate! but Messieurs! I pen—I indite—I write much—many letters to Madame Victoire L'Orient! I advise—I inform her of the life of my son, her husband!" here vehemently interrupted the mercurial little Frenchwoman.

"Madame you are disorderly and will consult your best interests by being quiet," said the magistrate. Then addressing the counsel for the defence, he said—"This point also is one for the adjudgement of their lordships."

There was a short pause, at the end of which the magistrate inquired—

"Has the defence anything further to advance?"

"The defence has nothing further to advance *here* and *now*," replied Lord Dazzleright, with a peculiar emphasis.

"Then, Madam," said the magistrate, addressing Estelle, "I consider this a case for court, and I shall therefore bind you over for trial to answer to the charge of bigamy, at the next assizes to be holden at the city of Exeter."

The pale and drooping girl who had remained all this time with her face bowed and hidden upon her hands in the folds of her bridal veil, now raised her eyes in wild affright, looking so much like an amazed and terrified child in the grasp of some horrible power, that the good clergyman, Mr. Oldfield, hastened to her side and stooped to say—

"It is but a form, my child. No action can be sucessfully sustained against you. Trust in God, and take courage."

"Have you bail?" inquired Sir George Bannerman, who had just been giving some private directions to his secretary.

Estelle shook her head—poor girl, she did not fairly understand the purport of the question.

"Lady Montressor *has* bail, your worship. The Reverend Mr. Oldfield and the Reverend Mr. Trevor stand ready to enter into a recognizance with her, or rather with her husband, Lord Montressor, for her appearance at court," said Lord Dazzleright.

The magistrate turned to direct his secretary to fill out the proper forms. And while that functionary was busily scribbling, Estelle turned to Lord Dazzleright and pleaded—

"For the love of the Saviour, my lord! do not, oh! do not continue to drag the spotless name of Montressor through the mire of my misery! I would rather,—oh! far rather, that conviction should come with all its train of horrors for me, than that I should be saved, at the expense of one speck upon that stainless name."

Without replying to her prayer, the advocate, turning toward Lord Montressor, said,—

"Will your lordship be so good as to come and speak to this lady; you may be able to bring her to reason."

Lord Montressor, who had heard or divined the purport of Estelle's plaintive petition, and who desired nothing more than the opportunity of re-assuring her, now came to her side and said,

"Estelle, my beloved, look up! I hold you as my dear and honored wife, in whose cause it is both my duty and inclination to risk, if needed, life and fortune, and sacred honor. Estelle, beloved! you know that Baron Dazzleright is at this time esteemed the most eminent lawyer in the three kingdoms. His legal opinion is considered of the very first importance. He holds the secret marriage into which you, as an infant, were entrapped, ten years since, to be perfectly void; and, on the other hand, the marriage solemnized between us this day, to be perfectly valid. His opinion upon the validity of our marriage, supported by the authorities he adduces, and the developments of the last two hours, has decided my course. I stand upon the legality of the ceremony this day performed in the church of Hyde; I claim the rights of a husband to protect and shelter you; and here pledge my life if needful, my fortune, my unblemished name and sacred honor to bear you blameless through the severe ordeal. Therefore, *Lady Montressor*, do not again seek to cast off the support that is most righteously your own, nor the honorable name that does not deserve repudiation at your hands. Remember, that it is your *husband* who requires this of you!"

Lord Montressor spoke with an air of beautifully blended deference, tenderness, and dignity, almost impossible to resist.

Lord Dazzleright's fine face beamed with sympathetic admiration—and clasping the hand of the noble speaker, he said—

"God bless you, Lord Montressor, for you are very right! and if there is a man—peer, or prince—in the empire who could take, unquestioned, the position that you now take and discharge with delicacy and discretion, its difficult duties, that man is your lordship. God bless you!"

But all this while Estelle, with her clasped hands hanging down, her head drooped upon her breast, and her eyes lowered to the ground, remained in mournful silence. Nor did she once change her position, or look up, or speak, until the magistrate called the two sureties to sign the recognizance that was now ready. The two clergymen advanced to the table. Lord Dazzleright also followed, and she was left standing alone, or guarded, as it were, by Lord Montressor.

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* In the old chronicle of the Kings of France from Pharamond to Henri Quatre, written by the Seiur de Mezerai occurs this paragraph which is curious as the origin of the statute affecting the marriage of minors in France. The date is 1557 of Our Lord, and 10 of the reign of Henry II.

"One cannot too often, or in too large characters make mention of a couple of Edicts which were made this year; The one to retrench the abuses of Clandestine Marriage, vacated all Marriages made by the Children of any Family without the consent of their Father and Mother, unless the Sons when they contracted were above Thirty years of Age and the Daughters above Five and Twenty. And to put the stronger curb on the amorous fancies of young, giddy People, they added the penalty of Disinheritance. The particular Interest of the Constable (De Montmorenci) procured this Edict. His eldest son had engaged himself with the Damoiselle De Pienne, a very beautiful Woman and of a good House by verbal Contract; The Father desired to disengage him from her, to match him with the Kings natural daughter, the Widow of Horace Farnese."

"Has my Stella no word or glance for me?" he inquired.

"Oh! my lord—my lord—do you not *know* then that poor Estelle's soul is at your feet, in acknowledgment of your matchless constancy? But, Lord Montressor, it must not be as you have said. I may not lean upon your noble strength, nor bear your honored name, and will not, my lord—*will not*," said Estelle, with mournful dignity.

"Does my dearest Stella, my gentlest *bride*,—with all her graces,—lack the lovely grace of submission?"

"Poor Estelle, your *servant*, my lord, possesses, with all her faults and weaknesses, the capacity and strength to suffer alone, alone! rather than drag one whom she honors down to share her degradation."

"Your signature is wanted to this document, Madam," said Sir George Bannerman, addressing the prisoner.

"Remain here, dear Estelle. I shall sign that instrument in your behalf," said Lord Montressor, leaving her side and advancing to the table.

"Lord Montressor will enter into a recognizance with Messieurs Oldfield and Trevor, on the part of his wife," said Baron Dazzleright.

"It will not do. The prisoner must sign for herself," said the magistrate.

"Be it so, then! Estelle! Lady Montressor! if you have any regard for me, sign only the name that I have this day bestowed upon you," whispered Lord Montressor, as he led her forward to the table.

"Lady Montressor, I add my voice to his lordship's, and do beseech you, for the sake of all who love you, to comply," said the Baron.

Estelle turned upon Lord Montressor a smile, full of holy self-renunciation, took the pen, and with a firm hand signed the paper.

Lord Montressor, Lord Dazzleright, and the two clergymen bent eagerly forward to read the signature. It was—Estelle L'Orient!

"Oh! child! child! Why have you written thus?" questioned Lord Montressor, with a look of distress.

"This girl will ruin her own cause," said Lord Dazzleright, in a tone of vexation.

"Yes, my lords! she *will* ruin her own cause, rather than insure it at the expense of the noble and the good! I am poor, lost Estelle, wife of Victoire L'Orient, and have not the slightest claim even upon the Viscount Montressor's countenance—to say nothing of his noble name."

"We will see about that, my fair fanatic," said the Baron.

As it was now very late in the afternoon, and the setting sun was shining aslant the sombre library wall, and as Sir George Bannerman announced the sitting at an end, and betrayed symptoms of impatience to be gone, the parties,—both prosecutors and defendants, prepared to retire.

"You will go with me to Bloomingdale, my child, and remain as long as your friends can spare you. Mrs. Oldfield will be very—ahem!—will do everything she possibly can to prove her affection and respect for you, and to make your sojourn in our humble home as comfortable and agreeable as circumstances will admit, my dear," said old Mr. Oldfield, to his protege.

"We thank you very sincerely for your offered hospitality, reverend sir; but since taking legal advice my plans are again changed—we shall adhere to the first arrangement, which was that Lady Montressor and myself should go down to Dorset and spend a month at our castle of Montressor," said the Viscount, with calm emphasis.

"Your lordship doubtless best knows the just and proper grounds of your action," said the venerable man, bowing gravely, but looking, withal, so uneasy, that Lord Montressor beckoned the baron to his side, and said:

"Lord Dazzleright, will you be good enough to inform these gentlemen whom you consider to be the legal protector of this lady?"

"Unquestionably, reverend sirs, I hold the only legal protector and proper custodian of this lady, to be her husband, the Lord Viscount Montressor."

"But," said the old clergyman, hesitatingly, "there is *another* who claims that relation to this lady, and whose claims the magistrate, however unjustly, certainly favors."

"And whose claims to anything else but transportation will certainly be set aside by the courts," said the baron.

"But in the meantime, for the lady's own sake, had she not better remain with me, or some other friend, until the decision of the courts has confirmed her position?" pleaded Mr. Oldfield.

"Decidedly not, sir; it would argue a doubt of her position—a position upon the assuredness and stability of which I am willing to stake my reputation. As the legal adviser of Lady Montressor, I certainly counsel her ladyship to place herself under the powerful protection of her husband, and accompany him to Montressor Castle, to pass the time until the meeting of the Judges."

"Come, my love, you hear what the baron says. It is getting late. Take leave of your friends, and permit me to hand you into the carriage which waits, and drive to your father's house, where we will pass the night, and whence to-morrow morning we will set out for Dorset," said Lord Montressor, who was very anxious to remove his bride from the scene.

"My father! Ah! Lord Montressor! do you deem that in all respects, Sir Parke Morelle resembles *you?* My father will never look upon my face again, were that look needed to save my soul alive! Nay, best and most honored my lord! I *dare* not cross my father's threshold, and I *will* not cross my lord's. If ever a Lady Montressor sets foot within Montressor Castle, she will not first have borne the branded name of Estelle L'Orient. Farewell, my lord! I repeat now, what I said before, whatever may finally become of poor Estelle, may God forever bless and love you, Lord Montressor," she said, bowing her forehead for a moment upon his hand that she had clasped between her own; and then releasing it, and turning away, she addressed the old minister, saying, gently—

"I am at your disposal, Mr. Oldfield, if indeed, you still offer the shelter of your roof to one so lost as I am."

"Gladly, my child, will I receive you; and let me tell you, Lady Montressor——"

"Ah! *you* also, Mr. Oldfield! you will not spare my Lord's name!" interrupted Estelle.

"I very much suspect that it is your legal name, Lady Montressor. I have the greatest confidence in the opinions of Lord Dazzleright upon all *legal* questions, though I am not sure I would be guided by his judgment in religious questions. Thus I think his opinion upon the validity of your marriage likely to be quite right, while his advice to you, (founded upon that opinion,) that you should accompany Lord Montressor to his Castle in Dorset, there to abide the action of the court, I consider to be erroneous. Your own instincts, by the grace of God, have been a better guide. It is fitting that you should remain with Mrs. Oldfield, unless your parents claim you from us," whispered the venerable man, drawing the arm of his protege within his own, and preparing to leave the room.

But Lord Montressor, who had remained a few minutes in mournful silence, now spoke:

"Estelle, Lady Montressor, my wife, I have not said 'farewell,' and I disclaim your right thus to withdraw yourself from my lawful protection."

"Lord Montressor, your poor servant, Estelle, who would lay down her life to serve your lordship, will not even at *your* command, take one step to compromise or injure you! Once more, farewell, my Lord! And our God forever love and bless you;" and, with gentle firmness, Estelle lowered her veil and turned away.

Still Lord Montressor would have detained and expostulated with her, had not the Bishop of Exeter here come up and reasoned with his lordship.

"Lady Montressor does well. I have no doubt that Lord Dazzleright is *legally correct;* but he is *morally wrong.* I have no doubt that the marriage this day solemnized at Hyde is perfectly valid and indissoluble; but inasmuch as its validity is contested and remains to be confirmed by the action of the court, I declare it my opinion as a Christian minister that Lady Montressor is *religiously correct* in withdrawing herself from the society of your lordship until such time as the court has adjudged her position; and that any other course would expose her ladyship to much censure."

"I see, now, that you are entirely right, my Lord Bishop. Our wishes often blind us to what is expedient as well as to what is right. Although, indeed, I wished chiefly to consult her ladyship's comfort and interests. I thank you, sir, that you have placed this subject in its proper light before me," said Lord Montressor, frankly. Then going up to the bride, he said:

"Estelle, love, you go now with my full consent and approbation. Mr. Oldfield, it is I, her husband, who commits *Lady Montressor* to your care," he concluded, laying a marked emphasis upon the title with which he wished to invest her.

"Your lordship does well. And Lady Montressor shall receive the best possible care and attention while she sojourns under our humble roof," replied the aged clergyman. And, bowing to the group, he led his charge from the library, through the long passage, down the broad stairs, across the wide hall to the entrance door, and thence down the steps to the carriage in which he placed her.

Meanwhile, Madame L'Orient, Victoire, and the little fat Abbe, chattering like a trio of mammoth mag-pies, had got into their chaise and driven off.

Lord Montressor, Lord Dazzleright, and the Bishop of Exeter, now came down the steps, entered the carriage of the Viscount, and took the road to Hyde.

Mr. Trevor came out and joined Mr. Oldfield and Lady Montressor, and their carriage was ordered to drive to Bloomfield.

CHAPTER III.

THE WORLD.

"'Tis an atrocious world!' BULWER.

The news of the arrest of a bride at the altar, upon one of the gravest charges, and that bride, the beautiful and gifted Estelle Morelle, the star of fashion, the patroness of art and literature, the only daughter and heiress of the oldest and wealthiest baronet in the west of England, and the wife of one of the most distinguished among the young rising members of the house of Peers—fell like a thunderbolt upon the world, and spread like a conflagration through society. The story was everywhere received with incredulous amazement. The very enormity of the offence charged upon one so high and pure stupified belief. Even the reporters and "item" hunters of the press, feared, for a time, to deal directly with the question; and compromised the matter by obscure hints, and initials, instead of proper names. The most daring "sensationists" among the country editors were held in check, not only by the judicious limitatiom of the *license* of the press which exists in England, but also by deep respect for, and perhaps awe of the principal parties concerned. For the characters and influence of Sir Parke Morelle and of the Viscount Montressor were not only paramount in their respective counties of Devon and Dorset, but superior throughout the west of England.

The affair was canvassed with never flagging interest by people of every rank in society.

Upon the evening of the arrest, the large kitchen of the "Morelle Arms," the Inn at Hyde, where small farmers, artizans and laborers most did "congregate," was the scene of a considerable excitement upon the subject.

Along on benches, placed each side a strong oaken table, sat perhaps a dozen rough looking countrymen, clad in frieze coats or in smock frocks, and having clay pipes between their lips and pewter pots of foaming "arf 'n arf" before them. In an arm chair at the head of the table, sat John Oates the baker, like a self-installed moderator of the feast, while at the foot, on an oaken stool, was perched Peter Barktree, under gamekeeper from Horsford.

The fat little landlady was ever bustling in and out, between the kitchen and the adjoining bar, pausing now and then to catch a word of fresh news upon the all-engrossing subject which they were discussing with so much zest.

"Wot's been done with un?" inquired Bob Sounds, the well digger, of his next neighbor, Peter Barktree, who, having come in from Horsford, might be expected to know something satisfactory.

"Ay, mon! wot's been done with un?" echoed all the others.

"*Oie* dunnoa. How should *Oie* know, only wot Bill Moines says? Bill Moines as works on the Yew Tree farrum at Horsford telled Oie how zhe was zent off to the county jail. But *Oie* dunnoa how zhould *Oie* knoa?" replied this specimen of either stupefaction, or caution—it was hard to tell which.

"Humph! how zhould Bill Moines knoa, an he did wurruk on the Horsford farrum?" queried a doubter.

"Oie dunnoa. He wur up to the great house and saw the carridges drive off mebbe; but I dunnoa! how zhould *Oie* knoa?"

"Bill Moines loide, and Pete Barktree nows uowt on it. John Howe the constable toolde me as his worship had sent un off with his ruverance Muster Oldfield to stay tull the trial," said the baker from the head of the table; and having taken the pipe quite out of his mouth to deliver this judgment, he now to save time immediately replaced it and smoked the faster.

"Wot time will the trial be?—Quarder Zezzions?"

"Noo, mon, (puff,) its a piece of wurruk for his ludship, (puff, puff,) and wull coome before the Zizes, (puff, puff, puff,) and they wull be open next week," replied the competent baker and dictator, smoking vigorously between his oracular words.

"And wot wull they do with zhe?"

"Saying it goo agin un, zend un to the tre'd'll."*

"Noo they wull not, nuther. It's boogmy wot they zent Tom Sawyers acroos the water for. And they wull zend un to Bootany Bay coolonies," said an artizan who had not before spoken.

"Oy! but they'll wull ne'er do the loike of that to zhe, Tom."

"And whoy zhouldn't they do it to zhe as well as to another, Bill Stiggins, if zhe *be* hoigh quality? Boogmy's boogmy, the wurruld over; and wot's boogmy fur poor folk is boogmy for quality folk, and noa summat else with a foiner name; and wot's Boot'ny Bay for poor folk, zhould be Boot'ny Bay for quality folk and noa soome foiner place loike Lunnun town," persisted this determined Radical.

"Oy, oy, Tom! zo we zay! Wot's law for the poor zhould be law for the quality. A health to Tom Stallins! Here, Mother Higgins, more ale! Wot's Boot'ny Bay for poor Tom Sawyers, zhoold be Boot'ny Bay for——"

"Hold your blaspheming tongues of ye! Botany Bay, indeed! They'd never send the likes of her ladyship to prison for one minute, no matter what she was left to her own devises to do! let alone Botany Bay! Is her blessed ladyship, Tom Sawyers, ye brutes? Shame on ye! And she the sweetest angel as ever went without wings. Shame on ye! And she educating all yer children and clothing all yer old mothers, and lifting half the burden of life from your good-for-naught shoulders ever since she came home these ten years back—shame on ye! I say again, ye great, stupid, unfeeling brute beasts! to take her sweet name on yer lips!" exclaimed the little landlady, unable longer to repress her indignation at hearing her "angel's" calamity thus freely discussed, and therefore quite ready to sacrifice her interests to her feelings, and offend every guest in her kitchen.

"Coom, coom, Mother Higgins, dooant thee get hoigh with us. Give us zoome more ale!" replied the baker, holding his pewter pot up for replenishment.

"Well, then, keep a civil tongue in yer heads! and know who ye'd be talking about, ye stupid loons ye! That French frog-eater as the Evil One has sot on to pretend to her dear ladyship, has no more right to lift his eye to *her* than old Bony has to the crown of England!" Speaking of 'Bony' probably suggested battle, for the honest woman went on to say—"And more betoken they do tell me how the Frenchman stole her from a boarding-school while she wes a child; and if so be he should get her *now*, it would cause a war with France!"

"Chut Dame; wot do thee knoa aboot politics and war? and whoy should's majesty go to war aboot two yoong uns as doant know their own moinds? Speak wot thee knows on Dame," said Bill Stiggins.

"Oy! but the dame be roight! Master Stubbins, his ludship's oon mon, says how his ludship, Lud Muntresser, do stick to it as the Frenchman had noo right to coome here giving trooble; and his ludship wull stand by the lady een noo that her oon fayther and moother hev cast un off, and more zhame for um," said Mr. Stiggins.

"Ay will he, I'll warrant ye! And a right noble gentleman he is," exclaimed the landlady.

"Zo he is! zo he is! and heres's to Lud Muntrussor!" agreed the baker, tossing off the foaming bumper just placed in his hand by the dame. And similar discussions to this were taking place in every ale-house, tap-room and tavern-kitchen in the three counties, as far as the news had flown.

The morning after the preliminary examination, the elegant boudoir of Lady Bannerman was half-filled with morning callers, who had "just happened in" to hear a true, authentic report from first quarters of this most wonderful of scandals. Ladies whose charms had long been thrown in the shade by the peerless beauty and genius of Estelle Morelle, now canvassed without mercy her sudden fall.

"Sweet Providence! what a coming down! What a thunderbolt to the whole family. Arrested at the altar upon a charge of ———! Was such a thing ever heard of?" exclaimed the Honorable Mrs. Howard Kennaugh.

"Hush-sh! my dearest love—pray do not specify the offence in the presence of my daughters—the dear girls are so unsophisticated—their minds are so pu-err, I am perhaps just a little prudish in speaking before them," cooed Lady Bannerman.

"What a crushing blow to Sir Parke's pride," said Lady Mary Monson.

"What a shock to Montressor!" drawled Mrs. Bute Trevor.

"But what a life of deception that creature must have led, to have deceived her parents and her betrothed so effectually," said Mrs. Howard Kennaugh.

"And what could she have *expected* other than, sooner or later, just such a denoument as the present?" inquired Lady Monson.

"Oh—you see, my dear, the fellow was in a foreign prison; she never expected him to get free; and when he returned so very inopportunely, why she affected to have believed him dead," explained Lady Bannerman.

"Oh! the unprincipled wretch! What a happy thing for you and your sweet daughters, my dear Lady Bannerman, that you were never on visiting terms with the family at the Hall, and will not have the awkwardness of breaking with them as some of us shall," said Mrs. Bute Trevor.

"A very happy circumstance, indeed, I assure you; I esteem it, Madam," returned her deceitful ladyship, who even at that darkest moment would have given the largest diamond in her parure to be placed on the dinner list of Lady Morelle, and deemed the honor cheaply purchased.

"They say that Miss Morelle, Madame L'Orient, or Lady Montressor, whichever she may properly be named, for really one does scarcely know how to choose among her various *aliases*, has been cast off by her parents. What do you think of it, Mrs. Kennaugh?" asked Mrs. Bute Trevor.

"Oh, dear, I think it no wonder!—she had deceived them so deeply, and shocked them so dreadfully! If they could only cast off the cleaving dishonor with the daughter, it were better."

"Ah, but that will *cling;* I wonder if they will be visited by any one?" suggested Lady Monson.

"Really, it is impossible to say. As far as our family are concerned, if we had ever been on visiting terms with them, it would be out of the question for us to continue an acquaintance with a set so seriously compromised," said Lady Bannerman.

"Gracious Heaven! only to reflect upon it! One can scarcely realize such horrors," said Mrs. Howard Kennaugh.

"When does the trial come on?" inquired Mrs. Bute Trevor.

"As soon as the Easter Assizes are open at Exeter. The case will come up before the new judge, Sir James Allan Parke."

"Sir James Allan Parke, my dear? And he is the new judge! Why, is he a relative of Sir Parke Morelle? Maternal uncle, or cousin, or something of the sort? It will be a strange beginning to have to try his own relative, will it not?"

"That trial will be a solemn farce, of course; nobody expects conviction for *her*."

"But, just Heaven, will the acquittal of the court remove the dishonor that will attach to herself and all her family?"

"Of course it cannot restore her to the social position that she has forfeited."

"To think of Estelle Morelle in the prisoner's dock!" exclaimed Mrs. Howard Kennaugh, who seemed to have an attraction towards the most painful and humiliating points of the case.

"Yes! and then if she *should* happen to be convicted," suggested Lady Bannerman.

"What would be done with her?"

"She would be sent to the convict colonies. It is a transportable offence."

"Ugh! I suppose in that case her parents would never show their faces in England again."

"They will go abroad in *any* case, of course. For my part, I think that inasmuch as the girl has been arraigned, she had just as well be condemned. It can make but little difference, and to ship her to Australia will end the difficulty, and be a sort of way of providing for her. Her parents are going East, and Lord Montressor has applied for an ambassadorship to America."

"Mamma, dear, do you know I think *that must* be a mistake? For I heard from Mrs. Burgess, the niece of the Bishop of Exeter, that his lordship intended to assert and stand upon the legality of his marriage, and to sustain his lady," said Miss Bannerman, upon whom all eyes were now turned in astonishment at this annunciation.

"Louise, my dear, we must not believe half that we hear."

"But, dearest mamma, his lordship really *did* place her under the protection of Mr. Oldfield to await the event of the trial."

"Ridiculous, my love. His lordship had nothing to do with it; Mr. Oldfield took the poor lost creature into his house as an act of Christian charity. You know, my sweet, that a *clergyman* can do anything of that sort, which no one else could dare to do; because his holy cloth will 'cover a multitude of sins'—*of others.*"

"But, dearest mamma, Mrs. Burgess told me that it was *all* his Lordship's doings, and that in placing her under the protection of Mr. Oldfield, he gave him and his family to understand that she must be addressed only by the name and title that he had bestowed upon her, and that he chose to consider her own."

"Perfectly preposterous, my darling girl! a peer of Lord Montressor's exalted rank compromise himself with a questionable woman? Perfectly preposterous!"

"But, mamma dear, he is said to be devotedly attached to her!"

"Tut, tut, tut, my best Louisa, pray do not be absurd! Lord Montressor attached to *her* in view of all that is past and present and to come? Preposterous! Perfectly preposterous!"

And—"Preposterous! Perfectly preposterous!" was echoed by all the ladies present.

And this scene was but a type of a score of other such scenes then transpiring in the boudoirs and drawing rooms of Devon, Dorset and Somerset, where this subject was discussed as far as the news had spread. But, notwithstanding the ladies had characterised the idea as "preposterous," the fact was now forced upon their convictions that Lord Montressor did mean to spread the aegis of his powerful name and protection over Estelle during her terrible ordeal.

It became known, as every thing even of the most secret nature does, in some mysterious manner, that Lord Montressor had called upon Sir Parke Morelle in behalf of his daughter.

Lord Montressor in fact suffered one night to pass, during which he hoped Sir Parke Morelle might recover from the first madness of rage into which he had been thrown by this terrible shock to his pride and affection, and then his Lordship had called at Hyde Hall and requested a private audience with the Baronet. He was shown into the superb library where he found Sir Parke reclining in a luxurious arm-chair with a reading stand beside him, and engaged in reading, or in pretending to do so.

Lord Montressor advanced with serene gravity, offering his hand.

Sir Parke arose to welcome him, and stood, slightly bent, trembling and leaning for support with one hand upon the chair. The Baronet had aged twenty years in less than twenty days.

"Good morning, Sir Parke."

"Good morning, my lord. Pray be seated."

"Lord Montressor waived his hand, nodded, took the indicated chair, and when Sir Parke Morelle had resumed his seat, said,—

"I called this morning, Sir Parke, believing that you would be pleased to hear favorable news relating to Lady Montressor."

The Baronet's face suddenly blanched, his lips worked, his brow gathered, but his over-mastering pride soon controlled every betrayal of emotion, and he inquired, coolly—

"News relating to——*whom*, my lord?"

"To your daughter, sir."

"Your Lordship labors under some serious mistake. *I have no daughter*," said the Baronet, sternly.

"No daughter? That is very sorrowful, if true; you lately gloried in the loveliest daughter in all Devon."

"We will not speak of her if you please, my lord," said the baronet haughtily.

"Be it so, I will drop the subject of *your daughter;* but will you, sir, on your part, be so courteous as to permit me to speak for a few moments of, *my wife?*"

"I was not aware, Lord Montressor, that you *had* a wife."

"Then I have the honor of informing you of that fact. Yes, sir, I have the loveliest wife, as *you* had the loveliest daughter in all Devon; I have not lost her; and it is of *her* that I come here to talk."

"My lord! with all deference to your lordship, I must inform you that *I* do not *know* Lady Montressor; nor is it convenient just at present to form her ladyship's acquaintance. We are about to leave England for some time, my lord."

"Sir Parke!" said Lord Montressor, very gravely, "let us leave this unworthy word-fencing, and talk of this matter as Christian *men* should discuss it—shall we not?"

The baronet's countenance was working again; he sought to control its motions; he sought to repress the feelings that were swelling in his bosom; he was "very vilely proud," but his pride was scarcely proof against the earnest goodness of Lord Montressor's nature.

His lordship saw this advantage and pursued it.

"If you will exercise the moral heroism of looking this dark matter steadily in the face, you will understand it better—summon patience and strength, while I tell you as much, and no more than it is requisite you should know of the present position of affairs relating to—my wife."

Then Lord Montressor commenced, and while the baronet listened with his chin upon his breast, and his hand thrust into his bosom, told with all possible delicacy what had passed, and concluded by saying—

"Thus the law and the testimony, as understood by the most eminent barrister in the kingdom, hold Estelle to have been while yet an infant, the victim of a conspiracy, and entirely set aside the *quasi* marriage of the child, in favor of the real marriage of the woman. Therefore, sir, I shall use the power with which the law undoubtedly invests me to protect and defend Estelle in her present straits, and when these shall be safely past, leaving the conduct of her future life to be decided by her own conscience and moral free agency."

Leaning his head upon his thin worn hand, Sir Parke turned his glance wistfully upon the face of Lord Montressor. His lordship's calm, self-possessed independence of thought and action amazed this world-worshipper. But Sir Parke's thoughts, affections, and activities revolved in a very contracted orbit—from pride to self-interest, and from self-interest around again to pride—and as neither of these passions could in any degree be gratified by any sort of relations with Estelle, he judging the motives of others by his own, could not at all understand the grounds of Lord Montressor's action. But then the humanity, liberality and independence of Lord Montressor had often suggested the suspicion to the baronet that his lordship was a little wrong-headed upon some subjects, and that was the only way, he thought, to explain his present otherwise inexplicable conduct. When Lord Montressor paused he spoke, though somewhat off the point.

"Since we *are* discussing this subject, which you have rather ungenerously forced upon me, my lord, I must use the opportunity afforded me of assuring your lordship that at the time of your betrothal to Miss Morelle, neither Lady Morelle nor myself had the slightest grounds for suspicion that there had existed on the side of the young lady, a previous entanglement."

"I am assured of that, Sir Parke; though I myself had been duly advised of all this by Estelle, who would have placed a like confidence in her father had she dared."

As much as Sir Parke was surprised by this avowal, he was much too guarded to permit his astonishment to appear; while Lord Montressor proceeded to say—

"But, this is not the point, sir; what I wished to inquire is whether—now that you are made acquainted with the position of affairs—you will assist me in sustaining Estelle."

There was a pause. For a few minutes pride and affection had a mighty struggle in the bosom of the Baronet, though no one could have guessed it from his calm exterior, and then he replied, slowly,—

"Assuredly not, my lord. You, from the infatuation of passion, and Mr. Oldfield, from Christian charity, may unite to protect and defend her, and the literal construction of the statute may save her from the ultimate consequences of her folly, but Estelle is fallen, and no fallen woman must dare to call me father, or look to me for aid and countenance."

An indignant rejoinder rose to Lord Montressor's lips; he was tempted to inquire of him by whose culpable neglect it was that the child of seven years had been left to grow up under the sole charge of an unprincipled and intriguing French governess, who ended by entrapping and nearly destroying her pupil; to ascribe all the wretchedness that had ensued to his own failure in parental duty, and to hurl the charge of dishonor back into the teeth of the cold, hard, haughty man who had made it; but "He who ruleth his own spirit is mightier than he who taketh a city," and Lord Montressor forbore by angry words to widen the breach between father and daughter.

"God give you a more humane heart, Sir Parke," he said. "When do you leave England?"

"Within ten days," answered the Baronet.

"He wishes to escape before the opening of the Assizes. Well, well, be it so! only with augmented earnestness let me pray God to purify my heart from every earthly passion, and every selfish motive, that I may be the fitter champion of His poor child, whose earthly father and mother have forsaken her," thought Lord Montressor. Then he inquired—since they were so soon to leave England—whether he might not be permitted to pay his respects to Lady Morelle.

But the baronet prayed that he would excuse her ladyship, who had not yet recovered the severe shock her nerves had sustained in this affair.

Lord Montressor then left his compliments and best wishes for Lady Morelle, and arose and took leave.

Worldly pride was the governing passion of Sir Parke and Lady Morelle. Just so long as their only daughter had been an object of pride to them, they had idolized her; now, however, when reproach had fallen upon her youthful head, and she had become, though undeservedly, an object of animadversion, they were the first to reject and disown her; as had new honors, however unmerited, crowned her, they would have been the first to applaud.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

LABOR ITS OWN REWARD.

Such is the constitution of man, that labor may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the utmost that can be hoped from a sedentary and inactive habit; ease, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigor, readiness of enterprise, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold or heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; *but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand.* Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain; and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the portion between nutriment and labor, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that, in effect, the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that as their vigor fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from Heaven, and chronical from ourselves: the dart of death indeed falls from Heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct; to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.

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* Treadmill.

THE NORTH WIND.

BY C. D. STUART.

Soul of the frigid zone! O, wild North Wind!
Keener and colder than the frosted spears
Of Polar seas, that pierce the ocean's rind
And prick the sky! Eternal as the years
That flow past sun and star, with vain endeavor
To crush thy icy throne and glacier walls forever.

Why 'round our dwellings, sateless, art thou come?
Roaring like the unloosen'd furies—why,
With cloud and tempest, to our Southern home
And to the tropics, sweep'st thou fiercely by?
Hast thou not meeter paths, where hyperborean light
Shames the pale face of day and swallows up the night?

What forests, primal, in thy track have felt,
Like brittle threads, their giant withers wrung?
What seas been girdled with thy foamy belt,
Till all of art's proud fleets were whelm'd, unsung,
Save in thy scornful laughter! Arm'd with frost and foam,
Whom hast thou slain, what ruin'd, since thou fled'st thy home?

Mercy, this night! this night so dark and wild;
O, pitiless North Wind! stay thy angry breath;
Wrestle with rocks and seas, till thou hast piled
Forests and waves to mountains! Shafts of death
Hurl not upon our tropic blossoms—full in bloom—
Drive not our tender vines, all wither'd, to the tomb.

Back with thy frosted arrows! back, North Wind!
Spare our frail huts, where frailer life is pent;
Back! to the mountains and the seas, that bind
Thy desolate home, and let thy wrath be spent
On the white glaciers, 'til their groans, afar,
Mingle in music with the Northern Star.

Or, if thou must from out thy desolate home
Wander, forever, but to plague and pain,
Strike the proud palaces, and strew like foam
Lordlings and priests! the chaff of human grain;
Scatter the hateful falsehoods of six thousand years,
Born of all monstrous fraud and fed on blood and tears.

O, that some Spirit, mighty as thou art,
And pitiless, would blast the tyrant race;
Would rouse and thrill man's universal heart,
Till despot creeds and taskmen's whips no place
Of rest on earth could find, save hearts and limbs of those,
Since man was born, man's fierce and universal foes!

Blest were such Spirit! Blest were thou, North Wind,
If thou would'st batter every throne to dust;
If thou all fetters from man's limbs and mind
Would'st strike, and scourge the earth of fraud and lust,
Of bitter feud, hate, scorn; of falsehood and of wrong,
Sweeter thy voice than stars singing Earth's cradle-song

Back to thy home, North Wind! Come, mightier soul,
Out from men's waking hearts and glowing brains—
Destined at length to sweep from pole to pole
False creeds, foul rites, and bloody gyves and chains,
Bringing our clime a more than hyperborean light;
Shaming our day's pale face and swallowing up our night!

"IT'S ONLY A TRIFLE."

A SKETCH FOR BEGINNERS IN LIFE.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

It was at the end of the year, and John Hodge sat in his snug little sitting-room with a very long face. John was a carpenter by trade, eight-and-twenty years of age, with a good wife, and three good children. He lived in a thriving village, and received ten dollars a week for his work. He was a good workman; faithful, industrious, honest, and steady. He hired a small house for which he paid sixty dollars a year. He received his pay every Saturday evening.

We said John had a good wife. And so he had—one of the best wives in the country. She was not a beauty, but then she was pretty and intelligent; and her good looks were of that kind which grow brighter under the influence of love, as the wearer grows older. She was a valuable wife, and not a day passed but John had occasion to bless the hour that gave her to him for his companion.

The three children were, a boy and two girls, aged six, four, and two, respectively—the boy being the oldest.

"I declare, Emma, this is hard," said John Hodge, in a tone of mental pain. "I supposed I should certainly lay up a hundred dollars this year; but I have been to-day and paid the last bill I owed, and I now find myself the undisputed owner of three dollars and thirty-four cents!"

"Is that all?" Emma asked this with a show of interest, but not with surprise. In fact, her manner would rather imply that she had expected this.

"Yes. That *is* all. Now *can* you tell me where our money has gone?"

Emma Hodge was a woman of sense. She knew very well that there was little profit in telling the errors of the past unless she could point them out plainly and separately. She did know where the money had gone, but she feared her husband would not believe her if she told him, for her own eyes had been opened only a few weeks. However, she ventured to say—

"John, don't you think we—(she said *we* out of pure willingness to bear a part of blame which she had not incurred)—don't you think we've paid more for some things we have bought than there was any need of?"

"How? When have I paid more than there was need of?" asked John, in pure wonder.

"Well—it seems to me that we have paid so a number of times."

"But what is one?"

"Well—there are the two glass lamps in the parlor. We paid six dollars for them, when a pair for two dollars would have done just as well. Not one in a hundred of our visitors know the difference between cut-glass and common pressed glass."

"Yes they do, Emma. If we are going to have lamps, let's have them. I hate to see a cheap thing stuck up in sight. I'd rather go without money than to be mean and stingy about my things."

Emma saw that John was troubled, and she resolved not to argue the case with him then. He was not in a mood to be contradicted, and she would not touch his feelings for the world; so she simply said, as she placed her arms about his neck and kissed him—

"We wont worry about the past, John; but we will try to do differently in the future. Now let's resolve to save something the coming year."

"We will," said John; and from that moment he looked happier.

The new year commenced, and things moved on as usual. When the spring opened John wanted a new suit of clothes. He went to the tailor's and got samples of cloth, with a scale of prices. There was a very good suit to be had for twenty dollars; and another for thirty. He pitched upon the thirty-dollar suit.

"But," argued Emma, "this suit for twenty dollars is just as good. When the cloth is made up you could never tell the difference; but the difference in price we should feel sensibly."

"Pooh, Emma! You talk like a crazy woman. I only have a new suit throughout once in two years, and while I am about it I might as well have a good one. What would folks think to see me saving money off from my back? Ten dollars is but a trifle when we consider how seldom I get such a suit."

"But, John, you must remember what we wish to do. We wish to own a home of our own one of these days; and to reach that end we must be economical in all things. Ten dollars is just a week's pay."

"But the clothes, Emma—you would not have me go poorly dressed?"

"No, my husband. But see: In purchasing clothes we look first to our comfort; then to the fashion; and then to our means. Now this suit for twenty dollars will look well enough, and I know it will wear as well, if not better, than the one for thirty dollars."

But John couldn't see. He was determined not to appear mean in dress, and he must have the thirty-dollar suit.

On the following day, Emma went to the tailor, with whom she had been acquainted from childhood, and asked if John had ordered his suit. She was informed that he had. Emma examined the various fabrics, and finally found some cloth from which the garments could be made for twenty dollars, and the tailor assured her that they would wear better, and, in the end, be of far more value to John, than the thirty-dollar suit. The fine broad cloth would be good for nothing for him to wear at his business after it began to lose its first lustre.

It was at length decided that the suit should be made from a material which the wife and the tailor had selected, and for twenty dollars, Emma promising to bear the responsibility; but John was to know nothing of it. He was to pay the thirty dollars as he had arranged.

In due time John came home with his new suit, and when he put it on, he felt very much pleased with the effect. The pants were of fine, strong doeskin, and the coat and vest of handsome and durable materials.

"They look better in the garments—made up—than they did before," said John. "Only this cloth don't look quite so fine as it did in the piece; but it feels firmer. But it kind o' raises the nap in making, I suppose."

Of course Emma admired the suit very much, and her husband was happy when he found that she said nothing about the price. He wore the clothes to meeting on the following day, and when they were hung up on Sunday evening, he was very careful to have them turned inside out, and kept from the dust; because, as he said, "such clothes musn't be abused."

On Monday Emma went to the tailor's and got the ten dollars which she had so surreptitiously saved.

Not long after this it became necessary to purchase a carpet for the parlor. Thus far they had had no carpet in that room, though they had long been planning to have one. They had been purchasing gradually. There were some expenses of the year before, which would not come in the present year, and a carpet and a sofa had been set down for the present season.

One Monday morning John and his wife went to look at some carpets. John was bent upon a three-ply. He knew no difference between Kidderminster and three-ply; or between two-ply and no "ply" at all. But he knew that Brown, and Jenkins, and Peters, and Kopps, all had "*three-ply*," while Emma knew that Brown's three-ply was only two-ply; and that Peters' was a second-hand affair which he bought at auction.

"Now for our use a good Kidderminster will answer every purpose," said Emma. "We can find one just as fine, and just as good, only it won't have so many thicknesses. When the surface is worn through the carpet is done; and until that time it is good enough. We shall not wear out the upper surface for many years. And then a two-ply carpet we can turn—one side looks just as well as the other. We can have a dark carpet, or a light one, as we please. Come—it will be much cheaper to buy a Kidderminster."

But John could not do it. He wouldn't be mean about a parlor carpet.

"It's only a trifle—thirty-five cents a yard—that's all."

"But we are to get five-and-twenty yards, John; and that will make a difference of eight dollars and seventy-five cents."

"Well—and what is that when we think how long we are to use the carpet. It is something which we shan't buy again for a good many years. No, no,—I mean to have as good a carpet as any one has of my means."

Emma urged—she spoke of the true independence and the false; and she alluded to the time when they hoped to have money enough to purchase a home of their own. O—John understood all that. He meant to save, but he would not be mean. Eight or nine dollars was a mere trifle when we consider that it is for a carpet that must be in their parlor for years.

It so happened that the dealer was an own uncle to Emma, and she managed to whisper to him her plans. He had two carpets so nearly of the same pattern that they could not be distinguished when apart, save that one was three-ply, and the other two-ply. John bought and paid for the former—one dollar and twenty-five cents a yard, but the other one was sent home, and Emma put the eight dollars and three quarters in her bank.

John Hodge admired his carpet when his wife had made it and put it down. He said, how much better it looked than "one o' them cheap things would." Emma might have felt some compunctions had she not known that her husband was governed wholly by what other people had, rather than what he really needed. And then, again, he knew no difference between the various qualities of woollen fabrics, being only anxious to have his friends think he had the best.

When the carpet was down it became necessary to get the sofa. Even Emma felt that their parlor was rather bare. They had not seats enough for a small party; and as they must have more seats, they might as well have good ones—have them on a sofa.

Up to this time Emma had managed to save quite a respectable sum of money. Since the first of April she had done the marketing. Until this John had always bought and sent home the provisions; and in this department, as in nearly all others, he never looked at "trifles." Seldom did he go into the market without repeating the old sentence—"Well—I'll have it. It's only a trifle." He thought it very mean to ask a butcher to cut a leg of lamb, when the whole only came to fifty cents; and he blushed scarlet at the very thought of refusing early fruit because it was high in price. If Jones got strawberries, of course he could get strawberries. And if his grocer had "laid by a few quarts of fine fresh raspberries on purpose for him," he would as soon have picked his friend's pocket as to have refused them because he could not afford it.

But Emma had no such feelings. She felt that she was trading with her husband's money, and she was determined to show him that she was worthy of the trust. On the previous January they had reckoned up the grocer's and butcher's bills, and found that the average for the year had been exactly five dollars and forty-six cents a week; so this sum Emma claimed, and she had it handed to her each Saturday evening. From this she managed to save considerable, and yet John found no fault with his living. He never fared better. As he did none of the marketing he saw but little of the early, hot-house fruit, and so cared nothing about it. And, in fact, he never had; but the traders knew his easy, timorous disposition, and they put upon him what they pleased. Let the grocer say,—

"Ah—Hodge—you're just in time. Here are some splendid new blackberries. I kept 'em purpose for ye. Jones wanted 'em, but I told him *no*,—I'd saved 'em for you. I'll send 'em right over."

Perhaps John would venture—"How high do they come?"

"O—only twenty cents a quart. But look at 'em,—the first of the season!"

And John was surely stuck for the berries—half green, perhaps—out of season—small measure—and just worth nothing at all to John Hodge.

But these things were not practised upon Emma. She bought *what* she wanted; just as *little* as she wanted; and never what she *did not want*. She exerted herself in her cooking; and in their proper season she purchased as much fruit as was wholesome.

At length John and his wife went to look for a sofa. There was quite an extensive furniture store in the village, and there they found all sizes and patterns. After looking for an hour John settled down upon a sofa, the price of which was thirty-five dollars.

"Mr. Barnes has a sofa of this very pattern," said the dealer, who was a particular friend of John's,—"and I believe he will sell it very cheap. He is going away, and has sold everything else."

"Pooh!" said John. "I don't want any second-hand stuff in my house. Thunder! what an idea!"

"But how has he sold all but that?" asked Emma.

"Because the family who have moved into his house bought all the rest. They had a sofa and chairs to match, so they did not want his."

Emma suggested to her husband that they should look at Barnes' sofa; but he would not listen to it. He had read about this second-hand furniture, he said, and didn't want anything to do with it.

The sofa was selected, and John promised to pay for it within three months. He had not the money then. After this the husband went to his work, leaving his wife to go home. But she only went to the grocer's, and then returned to the furniture store.

We said before that this cabinet-maker was a particular friend of John's. John had worked for him considerable during the winter months, and he not only liked the young carpenter, but would have done much to help him. Emma had been acquainted with him ever since she could remember.

When the young wife entered the cabinet room a second time she found the dealer alone, and frankly told to him her plans. She wished to help John to save money, and in order to make him understand that it could be done, she must do it. She asked him if the sofa of which he had spoken was uninjured.

"Just as good as it was the day I sold it to him," returned the dealer, who entered at once into the spirit of Emma's plan, and wished to help her. "But he has made up his mind that he must go to California, and go he will. So he needs all the money he can raise, and will sell for almost anything before he would leave it unsold. Why not go over and look at it now? It is only across the next street."

Emma started, and promised to meet him there in fifteen minutes. She went, and not only saw the sofa, but found the owner there. She told him she had but little money, but that she wanted a sofa. He said he had paid thirty-five dollars for it only a year before, and had used it but a very few times. He would sell it for twenty dollars. Emma hesitated. She said she had hoped that she could have it taken to the cabinet shop, a few scratches obliterated, have it brushed up, and carried to her house, all for that sum.

Mr. Barnes at once said she should have it at that price.

"Pay Mr. Goodwin the twenty dollars when he delivers it, and I will look to him for my pay."

The sofa came in due season, and Emma paid for it, Mr. Goodwin promising that he would collect the thirty-five dollars from her husband, and pass it over to her

John was much pleased with his sofa. He said it looked darker, and heavier, and richer than he had thought when he bought it. His parlor was now complete, and he would have no more heavy bills for the rest of the year

And so time moved on, and Emma was at her post. The traders had learned that she needed no help in purchasing When she entered the store she knew what she came for, and just the quantity and quality she needed; and she bought just that, and no more. On the first of November *the* sofa was paid for, and Emma received the thirty-five dollars from the cabinet-maker.

One cold, clear, sharp morning John Hodge wished his sweet wife a "HAPPY NEW YEAR." Evening came, and the family were together in their snug parlor, where they had resolved to spend the candle-lit hours.

"Well, John, how much have you laid up this year!" the wife asked, with a smile.

"O—don't say anything, Emma," returned the husband, uneasily. "It's no use; I can't lay up money with my family. Our children have to be clothed and fed, and a thousand-and-one little things that there's no help for."

"But surely the children don't take much, John. You know all Lydia's dresses are made over from those which Emma has outgrown; and two-thirds of Emma's dresses have been made over from mine, and you know our boy has helped to wear out some of your cast-off habiliments."

"I suppose so, but yet the money goes. There's been five dollars and forty-six cents a week for provisions to begin with."

"But you have lived well, John?"

"Yes, Emma. No man could live better."

"And yet I have had only what you spent the year before; and you must remember that our children eat more now than they did a year ago."

"Yes—I suppose so. But you 've managed to keep square, haven't you?"

"O, yes. But now tell me, John, how much you have saved."

"Well; I have the enormous sum of twenty-two dollars and ten cents!"

"Have you so much?"

"There—don't poke fun at me. I tell you it's no use."

"Well, wait a moment, and I'll show you my savings."

Emma left the room, and when she returned she bore a little paste-board box in her hand, which she gave to her husband.

He took it, and having opened it, he counted out fourteen ten-dollar gold pieces, and one five-dollar piece! One hundred and forty-five dollars! He weighed the bright pieces in his hand, and then looked at his wife.

"Emma," he stammered, "what is this?"

"'*Trifles*,' John—only '*trifles*.'"

"Eh? '*Trifles?*' But what do you mean Where 'd this come from? Whose is it?"

"It's yours and mine, John; and it is the amount I have got for *trifles*."

But John was bewildered. Emma had to struggle some to maintain her composure, for tears were filling her eyes in spite of her. This was a moment she had been looking forward to for a long while with strange emotions, and now that it had come those emotions were all brought to a climax together. But finally she spoke, though her voice was tremulous, and her eyes bedimmed with tears.

"John, I know you will pardon me. I own that I have presumed upon your failing, but I could not help it. I saw that your '*trifles*' were eating up our substance. A dollar is not much, but a dollar a week makes fifty-two dollars a year. I knew that the traders took advantage of your fear of being thought *mean*, as you termed it, and that they were taking your money for things which we did not need. I have furnished you with all you needed, and I am sure we have had enough and to spare. You had paid the grocer and butcher an average of five dollars and forty-six cents a week. I have paid them a trifle less than three dollars and forty cents a week, thereby saving just one hundred and eleven dollars and twenty-five cents. Have I not done well?"

"But where does the rest of this come from?" asked John, eagerly, showing by his looks that he kept his emotions back until he knew all.

"You will not blame me, John?"

"Blame you? How could I? But tell me all now."

"Well. First, your best suit of clothes cost only twenty dollars! That trifle of ten dollars I got the tailor to give me, while he gave you a suit of my own selecting. But you know the clothes have pleased you."

John Hodge looked at his wife in blank surprise.

"Next, John, we have a very fine Kidderminster carpet on our parlor. So I got eight dollars and seventy-five cents for that three-ply. But you know we have been perfectly satisfied."

John still looked surprised.

"Next, John, I bought Mr. Barnes' sofa, for which I paid twenty dollars cash. So Mr. Goodwin gave me the money you handed him. But you know the sofa is a nice one, and I saved a trifle in the purchase. Are you offended?"

In a moment more Emma was sitting upon her husband's knee, and his arms were about her neck. He did not blame her. He blessed her, and from that hour he knew that he possessed a treasure in his wife which he had never before appreciated. The gold was in his hand, and even after all was explained he could hardly realize that it was all his—saved from his year's pay.

And John Hodge had received a lesson which he was not to forget. The "nest-egg" thus procured was not left alone. He began to look upon "*trifles*" more in their true character—as only parts of a great whole; and by a little practice he succeeded in putting on a bold face when he entered a store, and if the trader urged that 'twas "*only a trifle*," John could calmly answer, "But it is a trifle which I do not need."

In four years from that day on which John learned his first lesson on trifles, he had accumulated *trifles* sufficient to buy him a good house. And when he had become settled down in a home of his own, he went on laying up trifles still, in the hope that some day he might be able to work out a vast amount of good from so trifling a beginning.

FRENCH LOVE OF FLOWERS.

Flowers play an important part in Paris. The Parisian loves flowers; he loves them more than animals. What sweet smile, what graceful words, can a nosegay not win from lovely lips! For the Parisian lady loves flowers too; but she loves them only when grouped together; for her they grow ready-twined in garlands and in posies in the shops of the Boulevards; she loves them only as an ornament, only as the gift that homage offers. Flora is not her goddess—only her hand-maid who decks her head and her bosom; she herself will be the goddess. On entering a ball-room at the end of the season, would one not imagine that Flora, the lovely one, was multiplied a hundred fold? What warmth must they possess? In the hair, in the hand, and on the bosom, all is budding in greatest luxuriance. The parts of the garlands are so wondrously interwoven, that one thinks they must have grown so on the bushes; and again, they nestle on the fair temples as if they would never leave them, and had had their place there from all eternity. The colors of the nosegay for the bosom are so tastefully arranged, so melting one into the other, that you fancy the harmonious pencil of Nature herself created this union of tints, had produced this posy-flower; for, like a single flower, the whole grows out of an entwined stalk, and nestles and nods with delight. But the nosegay for the hand consists of wreath in wreath, a wreath of mignionette closes round the violets; round these a circle of rosebuds; then come heliotropes, &c. The Parisian *bouquetieres* are celebrated throughout the world, and over the whole province their productions are continually being sent.

CRUELTY PUNISHED.

At Abo, in Finland, a dog that had been run over by a carriage, crawled to the door of a tanner in the town; the man's son, a lad of fifteen years of age, first stoned, and then poured a vessel of boiling water on the miserable animal This act of diabolical cruelty was witnessed by one of the magistrates, who informed his brethren of the fact. They unanimously agreed in condemning the boy to punishment He was imprisoned till the following market day; then, in the presence of the people, he was conducted to the place of execution by an officer of justice, who read to him his sentence. "Inhuman young man! because you did not assist the animal that implored your aid by its cries, and who derived its being from the same God who gave *you* life: because you added to the torments of the agonizing beast, and murdered it, the council of this city has sentenced you to wear on your breast the name which you deserve, and to receive fifty stripes." He then hung a black board about his neck, with this inscription: "A savage and inhuman young man!" And after inflicting on him twenty-five stripes, he proceeded: "Inhuman young man! you have now felt a very small degree of the pain with which you have tortured a helpless animal in its hour of death. As you wish for mercy from that God who created all that live, learn humanity for the future." He then executed the remainder of the sentence.

PEOPLE WHO ARE NEVER PITIED.—We have no sympathy for a railway speculator, who is reduced to his last shilling.—None for an ill-tempered man with the toothache—None for a stout man running after his hat.—None for an alderman who is laid up with the gout.—None for a dandy splashed by a mud-cart.—None for a man who loses his umbrella.

THE SUTTEE.

The Suttee, or the execrable custom of burning the vives and widows of the dead, has endured for ages among all the natives of India, and is very common among the Sikhs. The description given of this custom by the learned Diodorus, the famous historian of Sicily, is the very thing as it exists at this day.

The English have always interfered to prevent this horrid and inhuman sacrifice, as well as the crushing of the devotees under the wheels of the sacred car of Juggernaut, and as far as control is possible, they have put a stop to the Suttee for the last quarter of a century, wherever they had authority to exercise. Even the relations themselves, now often endeavor to prevent the burning of the widows, and in families of high rank, the prince of the country in person undertakes to offer consolation, and while he is endeavoring to dissuade the widow from her purpose, the corpse is hastily carried away and consumed.

In Bengal it was customary to bind the dead and the living together with ropes to a stake, and to pile up bamboo canes so high around them, that escape was impossible. The widow was led by a string to a pile, accompanied in solemn procession by the nearest relatives of her late husband, with a band of music, and attended by young women and relatives, her male descendants going before. In Orissa, the pile is made in a pit, into which the wife throws herself as soon as the flames arise; and in the Deccan, the woman sits upon the pile, *with the head of her husband in her lap, till she is either suffocated, or crushed by the heavy wooden covering which is placed over it.*

When a woman intends to burn herself with her husband, her grief assumes a sublime character; she sheds no tear, she makes no lamentation, she lays aside her veil, and no longer conceals her face from the eyes of men; the thought of entering with her beloved husband with whom her life has been passed, into the blissful state beyond the grave—nay, by this expiatory sacrifice, to have facilitated and prepared the way for him, gives her the incredible energy to dedicate herself to such martyrdom. Women have been seen to pray and wring their hands in the flames; others, overcome by their sufferings, have rushed wildly out of the fire, but were immediately driven back by those around them. An Englishman, who was witness of a scene such as we have described, took the part of the unhappy woman, and stopped the awful sacrifice; but what was his surprise, when on the following day she overwhelmed him with the most virulent reproaches, saying that he had robbed her of her eternal salvation, and that for the rest—the deplorable remainder—of her life, she must be an outcast and a wanderer upon the earth, neglected and despised by all her friends, relations, and fellow-countrywomen.

But of all the accounts of the Suttee that have yet appeared, there is none so extraordinary, so striking, so full of mournful interest, which touches the heart whilst you condemn the sentiment and its occasion, *as the burning of the eleven women*, who were sacrificed on the pile of Runjeet Sing. Four of these women were his wives, and seven were his female slaves or mistresses. It must have been an impressive sight when those interesting mourners, some of whom were in their early girlhood and almost children, went slowly along from the gate of his palace amid the sound of music, and the thunder of artillery. The whole city of Lahore was present—men, women, and children. The body was placed in a sittng position, between high piles of wood; and as soon as the flames were at the strongest, the unhappy victims prepared for death.

Two of these were only sixteen, and eminently beautiful: *indeed they looked happy in being able for the first time, to show their charms to the multitude*; they took off their precious jewels, gave them to their relatives and friends, asked for a looking-glass, and with a slow, measured step walked towards the pile, sometimes gazing at the glass in their hand, then at the assembly, and anxiously asking if any change were observable in their countenance. *They entered the glowing furnace, and in an instant were caught by the flames, and suffocated by the heat and smoke.*

ON GIVING ADVICE.

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it without any very accurate enquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes at our expense, and assumes authority over us without our permission; for many would contentedly suffer the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It was the maxim, we think, of Alphonsus of Arragon, that *dead counsellors are safest.* The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which occur in oral conferences, are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his advice unasked, nor can be often suspected of any malignant intention to insult his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passions, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality, but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

MAN IS NOT BORN TO SORROW.

The record of human life is far more melancholy than its course: the hours of quiet enjoyment are not noted; the thousand graces and happiness of social life, the loveliness of nature meeting us at every step, the buoyancy of spirit resulting from health and a pure air, the bright sun, the starry firmament—all that cheers man on his road through his probationary state, that warms the heart and makes life pleasant, is omitted in the narrative, which can only deal with facts; and we read of disappointment, and sickness, and death, and exclaim, "Why is man born to sorrow?" He is not so: years of enjoyment brace the soul for the grief when it comes; and when it does come, it comes mixed with so many alleviating circumstances, for those who do not wilfully reject all the lesser pleasures which the loving Father of all his works has with so tender a care scattered at our feet, that even the grief is far less in the reality than it appears in the relation.

A STINGING FACT.—Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published, by those whose interest it is that the eye and voice of the public should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 1857.

Our only terms.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12; Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. It will be useless for parties to write us insisting on our taking large clubs at lower rates. An elegant family paper like the Ledger, (containing no advertisements, and beautifully illustrated,) cannot be afforded at less than these terms. We do not want any clubs formed in towns where there are news-offices established. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper.

No Travelling Agents.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends hereafter to act as such you can put him down as a swindler. The best way to get our paper is at the book and periodical stores; but if you happen not to be within reach of one, then you can send us two dollars, and we will mail it to you.

All Letters must be addressed to Robert Bonner, New York Ledger office, No. 44 Ann street, New York.

BLACK-MAIL EDITORS.

The Ledger, as our readers are aware, makes it a rule never to reply to obscure, insignificant papers, whose editors seek a quarrel with it, thinking that we will therefore condescend to notice them; but, inasmuch as a certain Chicago daily paper, well known in its own city as a low and scurrilous sheet, has, in assailing the Ledger, rendered itself liable to a rich and merited exposure, we have departed from our usual course in reference to it. Their advertising agents, S. M. Pettengill & Co., a short time ago, solicited us to send an advertisement to it. We did so; but, after receiving it, they telegraphed back to Messrs. S. M. P. & Co. that, on certain conditions, they would insert it. Mr. Pettengill consulted with us in the matter, and *we declined to comply with the conditions. What did this black-mail sheet do then?* Why, it assailed and denounced the Ledger, when the fact is that we expend more money in *one week* in employing great and good writers in order to make a good paper, than *this poor creature has expended for literary matter during his whole lifetime!* But the most amusing feature connected with the abusive notice in this disreputable Chicago sheet is the fact that a Buffalo paper copies it, and *endorses it*,—and why? We answer: Because one of the editors of the Buffalo paper in question applied to us, through a gentleman employed in the highly-respectable publishing house of Mason Brothers, in this city, to write stories for the Ledger; and *we refused his productions*;—therefore, this Buffalo paper copies the attack of the Chicago black-mail concern. So it is, in substance, with one or two other things in the shape of newspapers, that have assailed the Ledger. They all have something *personal*—something *vindictive*—with which to flavor their abuse. A publisher who advertises so extensively as we do must come in conflict occasionally with *some* snarling and malignant editor—and these disappointed creatures, when we will not submit to their extortions, rush into print, and endeavor to injure us; but, we dare and defy the whole brood of them, for, as the *Brockport* (N. Y.) *Republic* remarks:

"The New York Ledger has established its own character in the minds of the people, and no personal ill-will can lessen the high moral, literary and instructive fame accorded to it by its three hundred thousand subscribers."

PAST AND PRESENT.

We are often hearing and making contrasts of our glories and advantages, compared with those of our fathers and the earlier generations of mankind. We ridicule and make ourselves merry over their progress in the arts and sciences, and in their social and civil economy. But, while we pride ourselves on our superiorities, it might be a useful reflection were we to estimate the superior amount of social happiness and individual comfort we have really gained. Let us ask the question—do they bear a fair proportion to the advantages of which we boast? Has the world generally been advantaged in individual happiness, in a ratio with the rapid advances of what we call civilization, the arts and sciences, and commercial intercourse and wealth. We think not. Talk of progressive civilization! and in the middle of our nineteenth century look at the bloodshed that has taken place, and must still ensue, before European civilized nations can become a tolerable residence for their people. Civilization! No, no, advances in this characteristic of human society have not been on the proper principles in the old world, and but to a certain extent in the new. True civilization comes not of the enforced laws of kings and their cabinets, independent of the people's will; nor of habits and manners which they may arbitrarily assume, and thus make the rule of social life.

A feeling of fraternity, universally and fully realized, is the genuine source of civilization; and where this feeling is recognized and cultivated, there alone will it truly exist and advance. As to the arts and sciences, the progress in them has not been made always for the general good, but oftener for the monopoly of the few; and, perhaps, we might assert that it has been as often converted into a source of misery for the masses. And commerce and wealth, the great elements of our times, have proved not unfrequently the world's tyrants and their masters' curse. It is a fact, which history has written and will ever write on its standing page, that side by side with the boasted refinements in the modes of human life and its observances—with the wonders and discoveries of the human mind in art and science, and with the extension of commerce and the accumulation of wealth, there exists more human misery—more palpable, "appreciated wretchedness"—in the present age, than in any of the ruder ages chronicled by history. The cause is worthy of being studied, and we believe accurately reflecting minds will find it either existing in, or connected with, that selfish principle which takes the mastery of the natural and kindlier feeling of brotherhood, and by building up monopolies of this life's blessings and necessaries, impoverishes and oppresses the masses of mankind.

We must make, or rather have, civilization the offspring of the natural sympathies of the heart, and not the cold creature of imposed laws and customs; the discoveries of mind must be consecrated to the general, and not to any special, individual good, and commerce and wealth must become free and distributive in their character, before their natural, and heaven-intended blessings can induce a happy and contented era. Pure civilization is not inconsistent with the amplest luxury and the highest refinement, yet an age may have these and be far from the civilization due to Christianity. Old Greece, amid her pagan altars and myths, exhibited a splendor of luxury and refinement—a magnificence of intellect and artistic skill and taste, but she lacked the spirit which fraternizes and unites a people, and without which, universally diffused, the highest civilization cannot exist.

Another New Tale, by Mr. Cobb, will shortly be commenced in the Ledger. In this connection we would also state that we have made arrangements with T. S. Arthur, the well known author, for a series of interesting tales, the publication of which we will soon commence.

COME NOT!

There is a great tendency, among the young people of the rural districts of our own and other States, to rush to the cities. They discover a want of "elbow room" in their native villages or neighborhood—or, what is the same thing in effect, they *imagine* they do—and straightway they become dissatisfied and restive. They must be "off" somewhere. A very natural desire "to see more of life" seizes them. This may be indulged when circumstances, pecuniary and otherwise, allow of it. But whether proper to be indulged or not, in their cases, it is too frequently yielded to. Through it their views of things around are distorted in their proportions and conditions. The village grows suddenly too small, and too dull for longer endurance—the township, and even the entire country, which has hitherto been their world, has lost its enterprise and spirit. There is "nothing doing," and "nothing going *on*, any more"—and so they are resolved to "go *off*."

Now, *where* have they resolved to go? To the prairies of the West?—those already cleared fields, where villages spring up in a day, cities in a month, and States in a year or two. If yes, it is well. They may there do a noble work in assisting to lay the foundations of new empire States in the strong cement of virtue and intelligence, while finding the personal fortunes they seek. But, if they have resolved to follow the luckless tide, as it so often proves, to some city, it is more likely to prove ill—oh! how *sadly ill* thousands have found the sequel to be, of such a change!

Young woman! Are *you* thinking of coming hither? Ponder well the fate of many an innocent one who has come before you, and of whose saddening tale of disgrace and misery the local columns of the daily press are so full! If you have not pretty sure prospects of "bettering" your condition in the fullest sense of the word—that is, morally as well as pecuniarily—we would exhort you, as our sister, to "*Come not!*"

Young man! Are you *resolved* to come?—"*bound* to try it?" as the slang phrase runs. Pause, and reconsider your determination. You may do well. Hundreds have succeeded. But *thousands* have failed—failed utterly—failed woefully—failed ignobly—failed irrevocably! We tremble for you! We should like to say "Come," to all who ask us for advice, but the realities of city life warn us that it is safest generally to respond, "*Come not!*" We so say to *you*, unless you positively know that there is a good "opening" awaiting you.

FRETTING.

Of all ill habits there is none more unphilosophical than fretting. The true philosophy is to do one's duty, and leave the rest to God. Fretting will not remedy matters, if they do not go as we want them. It never got a breakfast in the kitchen. It never built a fire in the parlor. It never prepared a pleasant bed in the chamber. But it has often prevented the proper preparation and enjoyment of the first, stifled the flame of the second, and rendered the third any thing but sleep-inviting. And, as to its influence over the aforesaid culinary operation, by putting the stewing process to work in the cook's head, rather than in the pan, it has spoiled many a good viand. Nay, when that viand has, peradventure, escaped its interference in the kitchen, it has spoiled all enjoyment of it on the table!

Some people—very good people in other respects, too—make themselves utterly miserable by fretting—by fretting about smallest matters at that, while greater ones seem to give them little discomfort, let them go wrong ever so often. Well, if the consequences were confined to themselves, they would not be of so much importance. But they are not. They render the companions of the fretter, often, equally miserable.

Fretter! Take our advice for once. Cease to act as if you were old Atlas, with the world depending on you to keep it from falling and being dashed to pieces! Take life's incidents and accidents more patiently, and "as they come." In the meantime, do your best, in a rational, even-tempered way, to use or endure them. So you will have done your duty in your sphere. Fret not because you can do no more.

THE ANNIVERSARIES.

Interesting spectacles were the anniversaries just held in our city. Focusses of great Christian and philanthropic enterprises, uniting in labors of humanity and love, the brave, the good, and the self-sacrificing of all ranks and classes, and having for their common aim and end the amelioration and regeneration of mankind. From every section of the country, gathering the agents and friends of Bible, Tract, Missionary, Colonization, and other world-diffusive societies, they gave us at a glance, in their reports—but a brief volume of figures in all—the grand result of a year's labor of thousands, and tens of thousands, extending to every field of benevolence and piety, and compassing the whole earth. Of pagans converted, infidels reclaimed, inebriates reformed, the godless supplied with the gospel, the suffering, of many kinds and lands, happily relieved, and the great cause of Christian civilization everywhere pushed forward towards that jubilant consummation, when earth shall be without a stain or a sorrow, and all men a brotherhood of love, knowing and serving God—of all this, these anniversaries gave a heart-rejoicing picture. Genius and enthusiasm, with humble talent and quiet faith, these had their vanguard representatives, and these found eloquent and impressive utterance over the peaceful triumphs of the year—triumphs of religion and virtue—triumphs grander far, on the record of enduring good, than the proudest victories won by armed hosts on bloody battle-field. May the era of such displays never cease, but forever broaden and brighten, until mankind shall become one Christian family, having no evil to be repressed and desiring no good that it has not already attained.

EXTENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

The United States have a frontier line of more than 10,000 miles. We have a line of sea coast of 4,000 miles, and a lake coast of 1,200. One of our rivers is twice the size of the Danube, the largest river in Europe. The Ohio is 600 miles longer than the Rhine, and the Hudson has a navigation 120 miles longer than the Thames. The single State of Virginia is a third larger than England. Ohio contains 5,120,000 acres more than Scotland. From Maine to Ohio is further than from London to Constantinople, and so we might go on and fill pages, enumerating distances, rivers, lakes, capes, and bays, with comparative estimates of size, power, and population.

The Coal Fields of Lancashire.—It has been calculated that the available coal beds of Lancashire amount in weight to the enormous sum of 8,400,000,000 tons. The total annual consumption of this coal, it has been estimated, amounts to 3,400,120 tons. Hence it is inferred that the coal-fields of Lancashire, at the present rate of consumption, will last 2,470 years.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE.

Who has not read "Jane Eyre?" and who has not longed to know the personal history of its gifted author? At last we have it. Poor Charlotte Bronte! So have I seen a little bird trying bravely with outspread wings to soar, and as often beaten back by the gathering storm-cloud—not discouraged—biding its time for another trial—singing feebly its quivering notes as if to keep up its courage—growing bolder in each essay till the eye ached in watching its triumphant progress—up—up—into the clear blue of heaven.

Noble Charlotte Bronte! worthy to receive the baptism of fire which is sent to purify earth's gifted. I see her in the gloomy moors of Haworth, in the damp parsonage-house—skirted by the grave-yard, sickening with its unwholesome exhalations, crushing down, at the stern bidding of duty, her gloomy thoughts and aspirations; tending patiently the irritable sick, performing cheerfully the most menial household offices; the days passing "in a slow dead march;" cheered by no mother's loving smile, or rewarding kiss; waiting patiently upon the hard, selfish, unsympathising father, who saw, one by one, his gifted daughters sink into untimely graves, for want of the love, and sympathy, and companionship for which their yearning hearts were aching.

I see these sisters at night, released from toil, when their father had retired to rest, denied the cheerful candle-light, pacing up and down, in utter darkness, the dreary little sitting-room, talking of the vacant past and present, and trying vainly to pierce the impenetrable future for one glimmering ray of hope: and as years passed on, and vision after vision faded away—alas! with those who wove them—I see Charlotte, the last survivor of that little group, pacing *alone* that desolate sitting-room; while the winds that swept over the bleak moor, and through the church-yard, and howled about the windows, seemed to the excited imagination of the lonely, feeble watcher, like the voices of her sisters shrieking to be again enfolded in her warm, sisterly embrace. Alone—*all* alone!—no shoulder to weep upon—no loving sister's hand to creep about her waist—the voices of her soul crying eternally, unceasingly, vainly—give—give—and he who gave her life, sleeping, eating, drinking, as stoically as if ten thousand deaths were not compressed, to that feeble girl, into each agonized moment.

One smiles now, when the praise of "Jane Eyre" is on every tongue, at the weary way the author's thumbed MS. travelled from publisher to publisher, seeking a resting-place, and finding none; and when at length it did appear in book-form—the caution of the sapient book-dissecting "London Athenæum" containing only "very qualified admissions of the power of the author"—also of "The Literary Gazette," which "considered it unsafe to pronounce upon an unknown author;" also at "The Daily News," which "did not review novels"—but found time soon afterwards to notice others. Mistaken gentlemen! you were yet, like some others of your class, to take off your publishing and editorial hats to the little woman who was destined to a world-wide fame, but, (and if ye have manly hearts they must have ached ere now to think of it,) not until the bitter cup of privation and sorrow had been so nearly drained to the dregs by those quivering lips, that the laurel wreath, so bravely, hardly won, was twined with the cypress vine.

Literary fame! alas—what is it to a *loving* woman's heart, save that it lifts her out of the miry pit of poverty and toil? To have one's glowing thoughts handled, twisted, and distorted by coarse fingers; to shed scalding tears over the gravest charge which can be untruthfully brought against a woman's pen; to bear it writhing in silence, and have that silence misconstrued—or, speak in your own defence, and be called unwomanly; to be a target for slander, envy, and misrepresentation, by those of both sexes who cannot look upon a shining garment without a wish to defile it—all this, a man's shoulders may be broad enough to bear, but she must be a strong *woman* who does not stagger under it.

I see Charlotte Bronte in the little parsonage parlor, at Haworth, draperied, hung with pictures, furnished at last with books from the proceeds of her own pen; and upon the vacant chairs upon which should have sat the toiling, gifted sisters, over whom the grave had closed, I see inscribed, Too late—Too late! and I look at its delicate and only inmate, and trace the blue veins on her transparent temples, and say Too late!—even for *thee*—Too late! Happiness is not happiness if it be not shared—it turns to misery. But, thank God, at last came the delirious draught of love, even for so brief a space, to those thirsting lips—but which, incredible as it may seem, the father, in his selfishness, would have dashed aside: relenting at last, he gave up this tender, shrinking flower to more appreciative keeping; but the blasts had been too keen that had gone before—the storms too rough—the sky too inclement. We read of a wedding, the happiness of which the selfish father must cloud at the last moment, by refusing, for some inexplicable reason, or no reason at all, to give away the bride in person according to Episcopal usage—we read of a short bridal tour—of a return to a love-beautified, love-sanctified home—we read of a pleasant walk of the happy pair—of a slight cold taken on that occasion—of a speedy delirium—of a conscious moment, in which the new-made bride opened wide her astonished eyes upon her kneeling husband, pleading with God to spare her precious life; and we read the heart-rending exclamation of the latter as the truth flashed upon her clouded intellect—"Oh! I am not to die *now?*—when we have been so happy?" and with streaming eyes we turn away from the corpse of Charlotte Bronte.

Fanny Fern.

TOO MUCH.

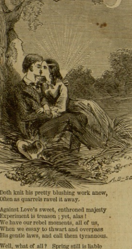
Too much of joy is sorrowful,
So cares must needs abound;
The vine that bears too many flowers
Will trail upon the ground.

Alice Cary.

"**Bed-Room Literature.**"—An English newspaper endeavors to depreciate Fanny Fern by styling some of her productions "Bed-room Literature." The phrase has an applicability of which the English critic is not aware. Her writings which have cheered very many "Bed-Rooms," have been the solace of at least one dying bed. A few days ago, the lady in question received a letter from a neighboring State, which conveyed to her the last words of a young lady who had been won from skeptical opinions by the perusal of "Fern Leaves." "I want you," said the dying girl to a friend at her bed-side, "I want you, when death has come, to write to Fanny Fern, and tell her for me, that when I get to Heaven I will tell my Saviour that it was her book, her piece, 'The Infidel Mother.' that led me to Jesus."

HALLET AND I.

BY ALICE CARY.



We sat upon the flowery grass of June;
The westering sun had struck the hills, and bright
Fell through the woods, the fragments of his light,
And on the silver saddle of the moon
Grey evening posted out to meet the night,
Close-packed with darkness.
What it was about
I quite forget,—some trifle like the hue
Of a moth's wings, I think, but we fell out,
Hallet and I, and as all lovers do,
Made up with kisses; for the faith that's true
Doth knit his pretty blushing work anew,
Often as quarrels ravel it away.

Against Love's sweet, enthroned majesty
Experiment is treason; yet, alas!
We have our rebel moments, all of us,
When we essay to thwart and overpass
His gentle laws, and call them tyrannous.

Well, what of all? Spring still is liable
Flowers to compose for every rudest bank,
And often since that day the woods have drank
The sunset light—many a time and well
Has controversy filled the interstice
Betwixt two hearts, and ended with a kiss.

Poor questioner, not much that I can tell,
Yet this, perhaps; however saints might frown,
Were I to-day of all their shining train
The highest camped in glory, I would fain
Knead back the splendor of my heavenly crown
Into the dust, and live that hour again.

A WOMAN RIGHTED.

Happily married, and in the possession of a "nice baby," Rev. Antoinette Brown has abandoned the pulpit for the nursery—a capital proof of the healthy influence of the gospel of love. We will wager a trifle that Antoinette could now honestly confess that she enjoys every desirable woman's right. So do most of her sex, save here and there a loveless, antiquated spinster, an unhappy wife of a husband who is the "weaker vessel," and sundry editorial "old women in breeches," who, whatever the relation of the sexes, will cry *dolor* till doomsday. Happy Antoinette! She has solved the problem without draggling her crinoline in the mire of politics. She has *man'd* herself in the right way, and if she be a true, loving woman, she can command her man at her pleasure. We rejoice in her peaceful triumph and the spoils thereof. She has vindicated what we always believed in—Women's Rights.

Woman has rights—and duties, also. She has a right to be beautiful, intelligent, prudent and chaste; a right to be loved, respected and protected; a right to exercise her conjugal affections and her maternal instincts; a right to reign queen and sole mistress of our hearts. Her duties are, to nurse and nurture; to mould and educate; to love, bless, and adorn the world. She was not created to lead armies, nor fleets; nor to sway regal sceptres. Her's is "the power behind the throne, greater than the throne itself." Her true sphere is the domestic—her true home and empire by our hearths and in our hearts. We boldly assert, what we believe, that there never has been since that pleasant morning when Eve blossomed in Eden, a well formed, harmoniously developed woman, who has sighed or sought for any other sphere. We doubt if there exists on the earth today a woman who is beautiful and healthy, loving and beloved, happy and imparting happiness, who is not entirely contented to leave Politics to men, and the Wrongs of women to be mitigated and righted by the softening and elevating influences of education and religion. Like Antoinette, love wisely and marry well, and women's rights will be secure.

THE ANXIOUS.

It is the secret wish of every man to lift up his head proudly above his neighbor's. He would supplant them, not to insult and despise them, but to be the certain, worthy, and admired possessor of much wealth, tantamount honor, and equivalent glittering appendages of life. And when men have this wish—and in this great city, God knows it is a very common one—to gain large fortunes, or high place, powerful friends or extensive interest, they must be extremely dexterous in managing all their concerns, upon every occasion, to the greatest advantage. These are the men who suffer most anxiety. For only consider how they must extend their thought into the future, consider contingent things, calculate casual events, lay long trains, chain one circumstance to another, skilfully apply their secret purposes, and confidently reckon upon adjusting everything and finishing their whole scheme as they frame it in their heads. Such men never lull themselves to sleep in security and give themselves up to disorder. Aware of the uncertainty perpetually attendant on all the affairs of life, required by the nature of things, and determined so by the will of Providence, they never set destiny at defiance and future at nought. They watch cautiously the long course of events, and dream constantly of every possible interruption. And as event succeeds event, and as their prosperity is advancing on to some real and solid good, what increased anxiety is theirs lest this state of things should not continue! or if it continue, lest it should not continue for the better! And if they should find themselves mistaken in their account—if the treasures on which they have fixed their hearts should elude their grasp—what wretched disappointment is theirs!

Shirks.—A shirk is defined by the lexicographers to be one who seeks to avoid his duty. The world is full of people who answer this description. They are to be met with in the public and private walks of life alike. The shirk is found in the field, the workshop, the counting-room, the legislative-hall, the court-house, and elsewhere. Even the pulpit is not always free from his presence.

WIT AND HUMOR.

PREPARED FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE, ESQ., OF THE LOUISVILLE JOURNAL.

We never could like either angling or anglers. An angler has been defined to be a fish-butcher, a piscatory assassin, an impaler of live worms, frogs, and flies, a great gudgeon sacrificing the best part of his life in taking the lives of little gudgeons. He cannot see a fine trout without wishing to trouble him with a line, just to say he would be very happy to see him to dinner. We think that a wise and benevolent man, engaged in angling, would be as much out of his element as the fish in his basket. But as to anglers in general, we leave them to their rod, for they deserve it.

It is very provoking to see how constantly certain editors are in the habit of stealing the best articles they can find in their exchanges. They should at least be content to pilfer second or third-rate matter. Their betters would probably have no objection to setting apart something for their use. An old Scotch farmer sowed a field of turnips, and, appropriating a ridge to the use of the public, put up a notice, "Thieves are requested to steal from this spot."

It is said, that when the cars upon one of the Pennsylvania Railroads were at full speed a few days ago, a flock of pigeons, in an attempt to fly across the track, were overtaken, caught under the furnace, and in five minutes were handsomely cooked. The next day a cow was caught and cooked in the same manner. If the locomotive will only put on a little more steam, perhaps she can daily catch and cook poultry and cattle enough to furnish dinners for her passengers.

An old gentleman wishing to be at his ease on horseback, took his horse to a riding-master to be taught to amble. Two or three trials were made upon the animal with but partial success. "Zounds, sir, do you call this an amble?" said the owner. "No, sir," replied the equestrian, "I call it a pre-amble."

A medical quarrel in one of the western towns seems likely to involve the whole faculty of the neighborhood. Some of them talk of challenging. If doctors must fight, let them load their pistols with pills, and shoot at each other's open mouths. They would soon get sick of that business.

A Political editor of a village newspaper cries aloud to his party, "let your trumpets bray in the front of the battle." We think that a good many political partisans can bray well enough without the use of such instruments. The use of trumpets would be a needless expenditure of brass.

It is stated, that in the late very spirited political canvas in England, Palmerston was indebted for much of his strength to the ladies. They were afraid that unless the Premier should be sustained in his determination to bring China to terms, their tea would be stopped by the enraged Celestials.

It has been suggested that the culture of hemp be tried in the South. A southern editor, remarking upon the subject, says that he knows all about cotton and rice but doesn't understand hemp at all. Perhaps he may yet get the hang of it.

A Texas editor, in reply to the imputation of being a small craft, boasts that he "carries as many guns and draws as much water" as his assailant. Without knowing anything in particular about his habits, we fear he draws more brandy than water.

A boiled potato was recently set on a dinner table at Chicago, which, on being opened, was found to contain a serpent. Many a serpent has been taken to the table in a bottle or decanter, and many a victim been mortally stung in consequence.

We have heard of a great many apologies which needed to be apologized for. A man who had accused his neighbor of falsehood apologized, in these amphibological terms:—"I called you a liar—it is true. You spoke truth—I have told a lie."

A female correspondent, one of course who never saw us, suggests a condition on which she will give us a kiss. We feel in duty bound to say to her that kissing is a thing that at every proper opportunity we set our face against.

It has been wisely said that as we cannot effect all we wish, we had better try to wish only for that which we can effect. The more we gain in life, the more we must relinquish at the close of it.

It is said to have become the fashion of runaway wives in Kentucky to take the husband's bed with them. They have no idea of exposing themselves to be advertised as absconding from bed and board.

When great people are in distress, they are apt to receive very liberal proffers of assistance from little ones. Ah! what shall I do? exclaimed a horse in a quagmire. Take hold of my tail, squeaked a pompous little mouse.

We received a newspaper two days ago, professing to give a full account of the creation of the world. We shouldn't be much surprised if the enterprizing editor were to bring up the news in his next number to Noah's flood.

There are a great many counterfeits among young women as well as among men. It is almost impossible to ascertain whether they are genuine metal unless you *ring* them, and that is sometimes a hazardous experiment.

A keen appetite is more common with the poor than with the rich—and perhaps fortunately. It is given them that they may like what they eat, not being able, like the rich, to eat what they like.

It is a double shame to a man to have inherited distinction from his ancestry if he bequeathes disgrace to his posterity.

CURRENT ITEMS.

Some of the accounts of the recent battles and slaughters in China contain items of thrilling interest. In one of the skirmishes seven Chinese soldiers taking a stalwart Highlander at a disadvantage, seized and dragged him off to be murdered by inches, in order the more fully to glut their vengeance; but the brave fellow watched his opportunity, broke from his captors, tore a sword from the grasp of a foe, literally carved his way through legions of enemies, and finally safely rejoined his countrymen.

Ready-made houses are now made and sent off to Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Kansas, with the same nonchalance as boots or cigars. One house in Cincinnati have sent out a hundred and fifty cottages on speculation. They are in small pieces to give facility in handling during transportation, but are so constructed that they can readily be put together firmly on arriving at their destination.

A very wealthy gentleman of this city was recently bitten by his dog—a large Newfoundland—which sprang upon him and tore his right cheek entirely off. The Newfoundland had been bitten some eight days before by a strange dog, but no apprehensions had been felt as to his becoming rabid. The sufferer and his family are now of course in a state of harrowing fear and suspense.

A Wisconsin paper says there is a man in that State named Creele, who is one hundred and thirty years old. He can remember distinctly events which occurred one hundred and seventeen years ago. He is living with a grandson who is over sixty years of age. Mr. Creele is unquestionably entitled to the appellation of "the oldest inhabitant."

A couple of gentlemen named Herring and Endy went out hunting in Mississippi; and the former getting behind a log, unknown to his friend, commenced imitating the cry of a wild turkey. Mr. Endy thereupon fired at the spot whence the sound issued and where he saw the grass move, and the charge hitting Mr. Herring in the mouth instantly killed him.

Great speculation is now going on among tea and sugar dealers, and it is thought that the prices of these articles will be run up to a high figure. The people, however, can bring the prices down at any time by omitting to use the articles for a short season.

The last news from England brings information that the British Government are determined to prosecute the war against China with the utmost energy and severity, and that they will seize and hold a large portion of the tea-growing district.

The last news from Utah is most harrowing. It seems that women are there constantly and cruelly persecuted by remorseless Mormon "deacons" and "bishops" whose morality would shame a Turk, and the officers of the United States are openly insulted and set at defiance.

There is a great excitement in New Jersey, near Paterson, in regard to the finding of pearls in the streams thereabouts, valued at from tweny-five cents to twenty-five thousand dollars a piece.

The Western newspapers say that peaches, pears, apples, and other fruits, promise abundantly in those regions; that they will have enough for themselves, and plenty to spare for their Eastern brethren—at high prices.

There recently arrived in this city, on one morning, by the Hudson River boats, twenty-seven thousand barrels of flour and sixty-two thousand bushels of wheat.

The oyster trade of Baltimore amounts to nearly a million of dollars annually

EARLY RISING.

THE TWO GODDESSES.

From the German.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Aurora wept, and with sighs repined
That the mortals she serv'd, to her love were blind,
And that some who had praised her with musical lay
Were the first to forget or abjure her sway.
—Then Minerva folded her close to her breast·
"Oh, grieve not, grieve not, brightest and best!
The stupefied throngs who thy presence slight,
Nor lift their dull eyes to thy robes of light,
Are mov'd by Morpheus, to cast away
The essence of life, and the gold of day;
So, not for these, let thy tear-drops roll,
Friends thou hast of a nobler soul.
The diligent Sage, by thine impulse stirred,
Breaks from the sloth of the sleeping herd,
And exults thy precious gifts to taste
Undisturb'd by their maddened waste.
The rose-lipp'd maiden, with spirit free,
Kisses her hand as she turns to thee,
And the cottage-babe, with its clear, blue eye,
Burts into laughter, it knows not why.
Lovely and innocent hearts are thine,
Beautiful sister, then why repine?
—Thou, who dost guide with thy dewy hand
Vine and tree to their bridal bland,
And hear the worship that rises blest
From new-born blossom, and chirping nest,
Nature in beauty and bliss is thine,
Beautiful goddess, then why repine?"

So Aurora returned to the morning skies,
Content with the love of the good and the wise,
And while her coursers thro' ether past,
Garlands and wreaths from her car she cast;
May every fair one who reads my strain
Her tokens share and her friendship gain.

THE WIDOW OF TOLEDO.

A TALE OF "LOW BIRTH AND IRON FORTUNE."

BY DR. S. P. BRONSON.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REVIEW OF THE REAR GUARD.

"The widow refuses to let us have him, eh?" said Don Jerome to the Viceroy, in the evening, as they sat in the cabinet.

"Firmly," answered the prince, with a sigh. "Nay, she even affects to consider the request tantamount to an insult."

The superintendent of the treasury reflected, and then petulantly observed—

"It is a shame to immure a promising young fellow in a position so obscure, when he has in him the elements of success in a higher sphere; and the selfishness that would restrain him from rising should be punished."

"We must not make war upon women!" said the Viceroy. "Let us bide our time, and see what fortune will bring to us."

"And in the meanwhile, the crafty, industrious, knavish Mendoza will have worked our ruin."

"If such be the will of fate, old friend, we must submit."

"Bah! brave men will their own destinies! As for me, I'll not yield till I am knocked on the head beyond the help of surgery! But how about the varlet, Pe—Pe—— what's his name?"

"Pequilo."

"Has he yet been found?"

"Yes," returned the Viceroy, with a quiet smile. "He was brought here an hour ago, and is now below in the custody of two alguazils."

"Then I have an idea. Call him up."

From his lodgings, the man in gray, trembling with terror, had been carried to prison and locked up without word or question for forty-eight hours, when his dungeon door swung back, and an officer appeared in the centre of a semi-circle of six guards and ordered him to come forth. He obeyed, and was met at the end of the passage by two other officers who blindfolded him, led him to a carriage, and conveyed him to the palace, when the bandage was removed, and he beheld himself sitting between two alguazils in a small dimly-lighted room.

"Holy St. Catherine!" he murmured, with a pitiful sigh, "are you going to let your poor patron be murdered? If you will take me out of this I'll vow a vow to give you two candles every day for a month, to say nothing of a fat chicken for the pious priest who shall say mass at your altar on your natal day!"

About an hour after this sacred promise, a page entered and made a sign to the alguazils, who arose, and each taking an arm of the prisoner, led him up by a private staircase.

"St. Catharine—St. Catharine!" muttered the man in gray, admonishingly, "remember the two candles and the chicken! O, if you have any bowels, don't let them torture me!"

They had now reached the landing at the head of the staircase, which was lighted by three small triangular burners suspended by small chains from the ceiling.

The man in gray fancied himself on his way to the star-chamber of the ministers of justice, where, as at the inquisition, prisoners who could not think of crimes that they had or had not committed, had their memories refreshed by the stimulating influence of the rack.

"*Three* candles and *two* chickens!" he silently suggested to St. Catharine.

The door of an ante-room on the right, suddenly opened, and the ex-valet's heart sank within him.

"It is all over!" he muttered with a piteous sigh.

The alguazils felt that he was sinking, and exchanging a meaning glance placed their arms under his shoulders to support him.

"Four candles—*five*, and *three* chickens!" cried the prisoner, whose terror was now at its height.

"Courage!" whispered the alguazils, who began to fear that he was losing his reason.

The inner door opened, and Pequilo, his legs oscillating, his cheeks white as a sheet, and his matted hair hanging down with cold sweat upon his forehead, was borne forward to the centre of the apartment.

"Go!" said the Viceroy, waving his hand to the alguazils, who bowed profoundly and retired.

On hearing that mild voice, which he recognized, the ex-valet, coupling it with the well-known reputation of its owner for justice, suddenly felt an ennerving sense of security, and on looking up and perceiving in the place of the stern judge, and executioners that his fears had conjured up, two benevolent-featured gentlemen taking wine at a circular table, it was marvellous how suddenly his courage returned, and how grateful he was to St. Catharine, though he was quite confident that her favor was entirely owing to the temptation of his last offer, which, indeed, what saint could resist?

"So, varlet," began the superintendent of the treasury, carefully scanning the new recruit from head to foot, "we have you at length—eh? Now, sir, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Not much, my lord," modestly answered the man in gray, who, now that his fears for his life were removed, was himself again. "I am a poor, worthless fellow, and the less I say about myself, the better."

This he thought a safe remark, till he should understand why he was brought before his questioner.

"The rascal has wit!" whispered the superintendent to the Viceroy.

The latter nodded, and inquired—

"What is your idea?"

"You *will learn that directly. At present I am reviewing our rear guard!*"

"What do you follow for a living?" he said to the ex-valet.

"Nothing in particular, my lord," returned the latter, fumbling with his hat.

"The truth, varlet!" said the superintendent in a tone that made him start.

"I live upon my wits."

"Which furnish you with rather scant wages, if one may judge from your appearance!" said the superintendent, sarcastically.

"I should not object to better, my lord," was the careful reply.

"Said I not the rascal had wit?" demanded the superintendent, in a whisper, of his companion.

The Viceroy nodded with a well-pleased air.

The man-in-gray, whose eye was not so dull as his innocent manner would lead one to suppose, saw that he was in no danger.

"What crime have you committed, varlet, to warrant your arrest?" demanded the superintendent.

"I would answer that, my lord, if I could. But not being in the confidence of the magistrate who deprived me of my liberty, I cannot."

"You are impertinent, rascal."

"If your lordship had been tapped on the shoulder by a greasy alguazil just as you were about to sit down to supper, and dragged to prison, and kept with little or no food for forty-eight hours, without being conscious of any guilt, you would feel sharp, also!"

"Silence, knave!"

"I am dumb, my lord!" answered Pequilo, who was sensible that he had nothing to fear.

"In whose service are you?"

"Pequilo Escalante's."

"Who is he?"

"Your humble servant, my lord.'

The superintendent exchanged an exulting glance with the Viceroy.

"St. Catharine has favors in store for me!" muttered the man in gray. "I smell 'em!"

"Suppose," said the superintendent, "your services should be wanted by a respectable party who is both able and willing to enable you to lead an honest life, what then?"

"The lady is grateful for the five candles," muttered Pequilo. "I wonder how it would be if I should make the five, ten! But we mustn't be too hasty. May it please you, my lord," he said aloud, as he called up a convenient tear, "your question wounds me to the heart. I lead an honest life already!"

"Ah! I was not aware of that!" said the superintendent, drily. "The minister of police, who has you recorded very differently, must be mistaken, then?"

"I very much fear, my friend Pequilo," muttered the ex-valet to himself, "that we are too well understood here! We are all human, all liable to error, my lord!" he answered, modestly. "I presume that if his excellency, the minister of police, were intimately acquainted with me, he would see the propriety of giving me a better character. Your lordship, for instance, who, though doubtless a scrupulously honest gentleman, has yet not succeeded in passing through your position with clean skirts. No later than the morning of the day previous to my arrest, I heard some market-men jestingly wondering how much you and the tax-collector quietly put aside for yourselves every year without any body being the wiser. Though there is of course no truth in this; yet to be calumniated is the fate of high and low."

The superintendent, whose proudest boast was that he was descended of a race that could not stoop to anything low or vile, turned red as scarlet with virtuous indignation.

"My name bandied among the rabble of the market!" he exclaimed, glancing furiously at his companion. "*Mine!*"

"Patience!" returned the latter, with a quiet smile. "There may not be a word of truth in it! This varlet, whose impudence I am familiar with, has been drawing upon his invention."

"As I hope to be saved, your excellency——"

"Silence—silence, knave!" interrupted the Viceroy, with his usual temperateness. "We have seen you before!"

"We *are* understood here!" muttered the ex-valet to himself, feeling very uncomfortable at the conviction. "His excellency has more brains than the superintendent!"

"How dare you, varlet, take such a liberty with *me!*" demanded the latter, with a threatening gesture.

"The fact is, my lord," returned Pequilo, relying upon his wit to carry him through, "I simply brought up this fact to illustrate how easily men may be mistaken when forming their opinion of others. If high official station, with all its dignity and power to entrench it, will not screen its possessor from suspicion, how then must it be with a poor unfortunate like myself, whose reputation is without such defences, and may be assailed with impunity by whoever is prompted to it by interest, idle gossip, or revenge."

"Do you mean to assert, knave, for a truth, that the market rabble dared to call my integrity in question?" demanded the superintendent, sternly.

"I do, my lord!" replied the ex-valet, with an audacity that even surprised himself.

"This must be seen to," cried the superintendent.

"It shall be!" observed the Viceroy, who also had an idea.

He blew a small silver whistle, and an attendant entered.

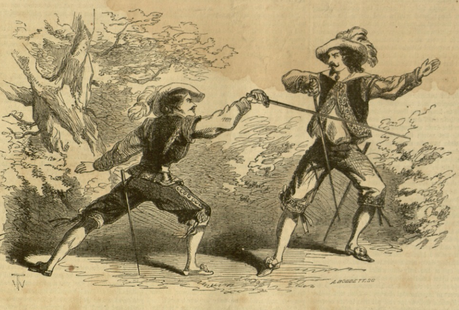
"Call the minister of police," said the prince.

The ex-valet became alarmed at the probable consequences of his falsehood.

"Permit me to add, my lord," he said, hastily, "that the parties to whom I referred, numbered only two."

"Their names?" asked the Viceroy.

This interrogatory was meant to embarrass him.



THE DUEL BETWEEN LEON AND THE MARQUIS DE SORBANO.

The man in gray, however, was equal to the emergency.

"Oh! my lord," he replied, with his customary coolness, "now you are indeed too much for me. While passing through the market I simply overheard two vegetable-dealers—I knew there were two by the variation in their voices—jokingly commenting as I had the honor to inform your lordships. But who they were, I did not turn to see; for my thoughts were on my own business, which was to purchase a few green scraps for a lean, half-starved mule that I had bargained for a few short minutes before."

"Call the minister of police!" repeated the Viceroy, who felt satisfied that every word of this was unqualifiedly untrue.

"I am in a fair way to exposure and punishment," muttered the man in gray. "It is the part of true wisdom to submit to the exposure for the purpose of avoiding the punishment. The fact is, your highness," he said, with a sly smile, "the market scene was merely an illustration, suggested at the moment, of what *might* be said in reference to any person in authority by impudent, meddlesome knaves who have nothing better to do than to find fault with their betters and malign their neighbors."

"Go!" said the Viceroy, who had worked out his idea.

The attendant bowed and retired.

"We have been detected in a lie and forced to confess it!" said the ex-valet, to himself, with a deep blush. "To tell a fib is nothing; but to be made to acknowledge it is not so gratifying!"

"What shall I do with this varlet?" demanded the superintendent.

"What you will," answered the Viceroy. "I leave him in your hands."

"I have a great inclination to give you a caning, scoundrel!" exclaimed the superintendent.

"It is your privilege, my lord," said the man in gray, modestly fumbling his hat, "but great minds are too magnanimous to avail themselves of their power. What satisfaction, for instance, would it be for your lordship to hurt the back of a poor fellow like me!"

"Dwells there such another impudent varlet in Toledo?" said the superintendent, glancing at the Viceroy.

The latter answered with a dry shrug.

The ex-valet peceived that his assurance was rather popular than otherwise with the haughty superintendent, and was by no means intimidated at that worthy's seeming rage.

"You appear to have so much talent for hearing what never was said," observed the superintendent, "that it would not be surprising if you could trace whatever might be rumored or spoken, to its source?"

The Viceroy pricked up his ears. He began to comprehend his friend's idea.

"I have often performed feats more difficult, my lord," returned Pequilo, whose ready wit enabled him to understand that he was being sounded preparatory to an engagement, and he concluded that it was advisable to be on the alert.

"It requires patience," suggested the superintendent.

"And tact, my lord," added the ex-valet: "two qualities which I can safely say, without boasting, are the main ingredients of my nature."

"You did not show a great deal of the latter just now, in extricating yourself from your dilemma!" mildly observed the Viceroy.

"True, my lord," answered the ex-valet, with a sly smile. "But it is not every body who could chase me from position to position and finally unkennel and hold me up to ridicule, like your highness!"

"Perhaps so," said the prince, coldly, who, nevertheless was pleased with the reply.

"Suppose," said the superintendent, "that a friend of mine disturbed by a suspicion that a person, an enemy, was trying to supplant him in the confidence of another person, should feel desirous to be confident of the fact, what course would you, in your wisdom, advise him to adopt.

"To employ another person, upon whose genius he can rely, to ferret out the truth," replied the ex-valet, modestly looking down.

"A genius like your own, for instance?" said the superintendent, drily.

"I flatter myself I should be able to give him a satisfactory report, my lord!" replied Pequilo, with the air of a man who feels that he must flash up and be spirited when his abilities are called in question.

"What if I were to put your boasted skill to the test?" demanded the superintendent, in the mingled tone of one threatening, and yet in doubt. "You would come in, after a time, as in the case of your market lie, and confess that you had spoken *too freely!*"

"That would altogether depend upon the man I was serving, my lord," said the ex-valet.

"What would that have to do with it, sirrah?"

"Everything, my lord. There are some whom men of my disposition would not care to work for. For such, I should take no pains; indeed would be certain to take only such as would give them mortification and disappointment: not because they might not be good men, but because I could feel no interest in them, and would as soon see them fall as rise. Whereas, if it was for one who pleased me——"

"What then?" demanded the superintendent.

"I would, if needs be, go barefoot round the world to serve him; would accomplish the task he gave me in hand, though it were to creep through every hole, and rifle every pocket in Spain! and as to coming back, I never would set foot in his presence till I could lay before him all the secrets of his enemy."

"Why, varlet, that is talking like a hero. But what if this enemy should detect you in your task, and sift you, as did his excellency here but now, with a little wholesome terror,—what then? You would betray yourself, and your master also—eh?"

"I might expose myself, my lord; but my employer—never! That is to say, your lordship, if I liked him!"

"Ah! that indeed! Well, then, varlet, what must this master be for you to like him?"

"In the first place he must pay like a prince; princely pay is worthy of princely services, and we always work best for him who rewards us best."

"Which means, in plain Spanish, that if the enemy should discover you, and offer you higher wages than your master paid, you would instantly enlist under the banner of his foe?"

"Precisely, my lord! I should not wish to serve a man who could be so stupid as to allow his enemy to outbid him!"

"There's a precious rascal!" exclaimed the superintendent, glancing smilingly at the Viceroy.

The latter quietly shrugged his shoulders.

"Why, what would you have, my lord?" asked the ex-valet, with unabashed assurance. "When men serve for money, they naturally prefer him who pays the best!"

"Said I not the varlet had wit?" whispered the superintendent.

"But if he have nothing else?" returned the Viceroy.

"Nay, he has good stuff in him, as will be manifest directly. He must pay like a prince," he said aloud. "What next?"

"After he has given me my commission, he must mind his own business, and let me go about my work in my own way."

"That is but reasonable," said the superintendent, after a few moments of reflection. "After that, what?"

"He must allow me plenty of money to operate with, while going through my task, without asking any questions."

"One word, varlet. What use would you make of this money?"

"How can I tell, my lord? Disguises would probably be required; servants might advantageously be bribed; assistance of various kinds be necessarily called in."

"Pay like a prince—furnish you with ample supplies on call—and ask no questions. So far, so good. What more?"

"Good wages while at work, and a round, swinging sum at the termination of my task."

"What do you consider good wages?"

"Say twenty crowns a month!"

"Good wages, indeed! Why, varlet, there's not a clerk in Toledo in receipt of such hire!"

"Perhaps not, my lord. But then what clerk hourly runs the risk of getting his throat cut, as I would do in the kind of employment under consideration? By looking from this point of view, your lordship will agree with your humble servant that twenty crowns a month is not unreasonable!"

"Ample supplies on call while at work—no interruption—no questions, and twenty crowns a month. Why, rascal, you are bidding for the provincial exchequer!"

"But the twenty crowns would probably ensure my resistance to all temptation on the part of the enemy!" suggested the ex-valet, with his usual modesty.

"And the impudent varlet does not sink through the floor!" exclaimed the superintendent, turning to his companion.

The Viceroy smiled, in spite of himself; but otherwise gave no sign that he was either pleased, displeased, or astonished.

"I always like, my lord," added the man in gray, "to present the worst view of the case, first. It prevents the possibility of misunderstanding at the final settlement."

"What then is the fair side—in case there be one?" demanded the superintendent, with an ill-concealed laugh at the ex-valet's audacity.

"The chances in my employer's favor, my lord."

"Good. What are they? As for me I think he is already turned out of house and home, even though he were a second Crœsus!"

"First, my lord, that I may draw on him very lightly for passing expenses."

"That is something to consider, certainly. The second?"

"That for all I draw, I shall conscientiously make it a point to expend at least one-third in his service."

"One-third, varlet. So much!" said the superintendent, derisively.

"You forget, my lord, that if I followed the usual custom of those in such service, I should generally keep at least seven-eighths, and in most instances the whole. Your lordship sees, therefore, from this confession, that I am both frank and honest—two commendable qualities that cannot help recommending me to your lordship's distinguished consideration."

"Saint Philip befriend me, or this fellow will make me laugh myself back to youth again!" exclaimed the superintendent, with an air of scornful mockery "Well, sirrah—the third?"

"That after I shall have given my employer all the important information he may require, I may possibly be detected by his enemy, and get my wind-pipe gashed, or my backbone sundered with a sword or stiletto, ere I can have time to call for my wages."

"I fear no such good fortune would betide either him or the country!"

"Candidly, my lord, I think not," said the ex-valet. "I have a fondness for life, and should do all in my power to return in safety and claim my dues."

"Which, an' Satan ever get you in his power, knave, be sure you'll receive with interest."

"We all have need to look out for *him*, my lord! But we have said nothing concerning the reward at the end of the service, which, of course, should be proportioned to the peril!"

"Good. Your modesty is refreshing! Ample supplies on call—no questioning as to what you want with the money, or how much of it you appropriate to your own uses—no impertinent interruption on the part of your master—twenty crowns a month, and a high reward at the end. It is enough to make a king laugh. But go on, knave. Make the largess cap the climax of your impudence; aye, say a hundred crowns at once, and empty the provincial treasury!"

"O, no, my lord," replied the ex-valet, "I shall not so far underrate your intelligence, or the importance of the service. I, therefore, shall say five hundred!"

"Is the fool's brain literally cracked!" demanded the superintendent, aghast.

"You forget, my lord, that I may possibly find it necessary to do some things that may call for two conciliating candles per day for mouths, perhaps for years thereafter; that I also may come off with a broken arm or leg—perchance a damaged head—that will incapacitate me for labor for the remainder of my days; and, most weighty consideration of all, that I shall not claim nor be entitled to the largess except in case of such triumph over the enemy as will secure my employer from all further reach of his malevolence."

"You promise to do *that?*" said the superintendent.

"Before his excellency here!"

"Enough, varlet! your terms, though outrageous, are accepted. Nay, if you keep your word, the five hundred shall be a thousand."

The ex-valet's eyes glistened.

"St. Catherine shall have the ten candles!" he muttered, as if to some invisible attendant of that doubtless worthy lady. "Your lordship is worthy to be a prince!" he observed, aloud. "You understand how to completely win one over in the beginning!"

"Silence, varlet! No ill-timed flattery. I am a soldier—not a courtier!"

"And a great soldier, too, my lord; for you know how to make your men put forth all their energies."

"Have done, sirrah, and hear me. A certain poor wretch called Don Garcia de Vega, who till recently had been supposed dead, has suddenly been discovered living in disguise and obscurity in the neighborhood of Toledo, and intelligence to that effect forwarded to the king. The minister of justice, Don Juan de Mendoza is suspected by a certain person—a near friend of mine—of having lodged that information at Madrid for other than patriotic motives, and to learn the character of those motives is to my friend of the last importance. This, sirrah, is your mission. Is it in your mind?"

"As if riveted, my lord. Don Juan de Mendoza the elder, and father of him who was recently slain in a duel with the young Marquis de Sorbano?"

"The same," said the superintendent, who, together with the Viceroy, surveyed him in surprise. "You know him?"

"I am a man who lives upon his wits, and familiar with the faces and the histories of nearly all Toledo," was the reply. "Don Garcia de Vega, whilom of the royal court, and father of the secretary of the rich young widow, Donna Isabel de la Montera?"

The Viceroy and the superintendent started and exchanged glances.

"How know you that?" demanded the latter, in amazement.

"I am a man who lives upon his wits, my lord," repeated the ex-valet, "and the secrets of many are, without their knowledge, in my keeping. If I turn a part of this knowledge to account, and gather so much more as will enable me to serve your lordship's friend, why I'll have fulfilled his and your desire, and done something also for my own pocket. But thoughts are flashing and swelling in my brain, and I need to be alone to arrange them according to their proper places in my plan of action, whose outlines I even now perceive, though indistinctly. Am I free to come and go, your excellency?"

The Viceroy bowed.

"Then I'll home at once. By the way, your lordship, my palm itches for the earnest. Make it—say, ten crowns!"

The superintendent handed him the money.

"I'll do myself the honor to see you again, my lord, some time within a week. And now, senors, as I'm a starving man, I'll to my lodgings and to supper. Adieu!"

"The rear guard is drunk with the fortune he sees before *him*!" said the superintendent, in astonishment. "But your highness is pale!"

"I would that Leon were not the son of the Count de Vega!" returned the Viceroy, gloomily.

CHAPTER XIV.

SHOWING HOW THE MARQUIS WENT OUT ON HIS FEET AND RETURNED HOME ON HIS BACK.

Leon rose early—that is to say, just as day was breaking, and hurriedly completed his toilet. He had slept but little during the night, and hence was not so bright as usual. Though pale, however, his young, well-trained nerves were firm as steel. He paced his chamber awhile, meditating upon his brief interview with his late mistress, and scarcely giving a thought to the insolent marquis, whom he was so soon to meet in deadly conflict. Glancing at length through the window and perceiving that the sun was beginning to empurple the sky with its early beams, he drew on his hat and proceeded with a calm, steady step to the place of meeting.

The marquis was already upon the ground, and impatiently awaiting him.

"You are late, master secretary!" he observed, with a cold sneer.

"I am early enough for your purpose!" returned Leon, divesting himself of his hat, shoulder cloak and scabbard, so as to give himself full play; an example which was rapidly followed by the marquis, whose bearing was proud and supercilious.

In a few moments both were ready.

"And now, my lord," continued Leon, allowing the blade of his rapier to rest for the moment in the hollow of his left arm, "ere we engage, I should be glad of an explanation of yesterday's rudeness. I am unconscious of having said or done aught to merit so gross and ungentlemanly an affront?"

"Ha! does your heart fail you already?" demanded the marquis.

"That will be seen presently," replied Leon, restraining himself "But I regard it as due both to your dignity and mine, senor, that you should be man enough to state why you have found it consistent with the honor of a true cavalier to force this quarrel upon me!"

"*Your* 'dignity'!" returned the marquis, with a scornful laugh. "We shall have valets, butlers, and footmen talking of their honor next!"

Leon trembled with indignation, and his eyes kindled.

"You have no nice sense of the delicacy which becomes a Spanish gentleman," he said, disdainfully, "and it is idle to appeal to what you do not possess. You are one of that numerous order of low minds that have to be taught what is due to others by chastisement. To your guard, senor, while I strip you of your star of nobility which you know not how to carry. To your guard!"

Three passes, and the marquis was bleeding in the left shoulder:

Five passes, and on his left breast appeared a crimson spot, which soon lengthened with running blood, in the form of a nail:

Four passes, and he was touched in the right shoulder:

Five passes, and he was pierced in the right breast.

He became wild, fierce, confused.

Four passes, and the fleshy part of his sword-arm was red from a sharp puncture:

Five passes, and his rapier was flying through the air, and himself staggering like a drunkard to the earth.

"May heaven's lightning wither your arm!" he exclaimed, raising himself on his hands and looking up at his conqueror with a malignant glare; "may your every step in life be attended with humiliation, all your hopes be frustrated, your days prolonged till every white hair shall be a living witness of a separate shame, and your last hour foam with the bitter curses of corroding dis—dis—disappointment!" And he dropped insensible upon the grass, the shade of a neighboring tree barely allowing a streak of sunlight to burnish his pale brow.

"Wheugh!" cried an invisible voice. "With what a healthy hatred some men spit out their bile!"

Turning in the direction of the sound, Leon beheld the Count de Perez emerging from a small adjoining cypress copse.

"You have maintained your reputation, senor, as the first swordsman of the gymnasium!" he smilingly observed, as he advanced. "Such pinking I have not seen this many a day!"

"You witnessed the fight, Count?" said Leon, inquiringly.

"From first to last, from behind yon friendly clump, which I reached some five minutes ere my defunct friend arrived," was the reply. "But I see you are wondering how I came to know you were to meet. Your quarrel at the gymnasium was, ere nightfall, bruited throughout Toledo. So much for the key. But I had an inkling of it also from Sorbano himself, who would have been glad to have me act as his friend in the affair. But, no matter. It is all over with him now, and he has no one to thank for it but himself."

"Perhaps, senor," said Leon, as he drew on his cloak and hat, "you can inform me why I was forced into this conflict?"

"I could do so," answered the count; "but unhappily the secret is not mine. It was mentioned to me in confidence by my late friend here, in a way which closed my lips, or I should take great pleasure in laying it before you!"

"I, of course, could not ask you, senor, to do an act that would be unworthy of a Spanish cavalier. But as I am about to woo fortune elsewhere, it would be a relief to understand the foundation cause of an event which cannot otherwise than have for me an unpleasant remembrance. If, therefore, you could refer me to any one in possession of the fact, whose honor would not suffer in imparting it, I should feel myself under an obligation which it would be both a pleasure and a duty to acknowledge."

"I should be happy to give you the name of such party, senor; but it is not in my power. I am not aware that the secret is known to any one but myself. But may I ask you a question, senor?"

Leon bowed.

"Do you seriously purpose to leave Toledo?"

"This very day, count."

"Another question, senor. Is this decision the result of the unfortunate affair of this morning, or was it formed before?"

"It has been the deliberate resolve of many days."

"Sorbano was too precipitate!" muttered the count to himself. "See what it is to be too headstrong! But, pshaw! who ever knew wisdom to nestle in the brain of a man mad enough to run after a woman? Enough, senor," he said, aloud. "I asked only for the satisfaction of a thought; and believe me when I add that I regret that I am not at liberty to free your mind from the uneasiness which your ignorance upon this point cannot fail to make permanent. But you see what ties me—honor!"

"I respect your scruples, Count, and thank you for your good will. May I, in taking my adieu, solicit a favor at your hands?"

"It is granted ere asked, senor."

"It is this, Count: That you will see or send word to the relatives of this man of where his body may be found, and also of how and by whom he fell?"

"With great pleasure, senor."

"Many, many thanks! Farewell!" Then glancing at the corse of his late antagonist, he murmured, "I never shed blood before!" and took his departure with a weary heart.

"A noble fellow!" mused the count, looking after him; "and with a soul above his station. That the fate of such a man should be clouded by so worthless and unimportant a thing as a woman! But it is ever thus. Fortune, the impudent jilt, takes a special delight in tormenting the good and brave, through the medium of petticoated syrens, who have been at the bottom of all human trouble since the world began. What a blessing it would be, if they could only be withdrawn to another planet, and—kept there! If I were a great monarch, I'd banish all women to a separate part of my empire, and surround them by a great high wall to keep them from looking over; for in that lies their chief danger Let one of them but once turn her dark eyes upon a man, and he is thenceforth not worth the food he consumes. From a sensible man he degenerates into a puling lackbrain; composes madrigals, and sings them in lackadaisical strains under the lady's casement; wears his hair in careless confusion, his collar awry; sighs in his walks and dreams; thinks the owner of the eyes an angel, and the only one in the world; waxes fierce against whoever else may have fallen under the melancholy influence of the same magnetic eyes, and thinks death too light a punishment for the poor fool's misfortune—never for an instant imagining that himself is laboring under the same afflicting visitation; acts and conducts himself in all respects like a pitiful lunatic, and says and performs wild things generally. Nothing will restore him to sanity but marriage. Like a fluttering dove under the fascination of a serpent, the eye of the lady draws him nearer and more near, till a wedding-ring is round his neck, when he is at once restored to his senses and—to the horrors of matrimonial slavery!—from which may St. Francis deliver me and all true lovers of freedom, but me especially! There's a fellow, now," he continued, turning to the body, "who, regardless of all my friendly warnings, permitted himself to fall a victim to a pair of dark eyes, and see what has come of it! There's not a beggar in Toledo that would exchange lots with him, for all his wealth and rank. As I look down upon what is left of the proud, self-sufficient popinjay that left his father's house this morning, I could almost find it in my heart to pardon the base proposal he made to me yesterday. He is not so haughty now, nor with half the opinion of his own consequence that he entertained one short hour ago Well, peace to his suffering soul' the time has been when he would have shrunk from an unworthy thought; yea, when he was true to the high sense of honor which distinguishes the gentleman from the varlet. But he was fascinated by a pair of dark eyes, and his brain went a-gadding, and now look where he lies! O, woman—woman! breaker of friendships, breeder of mischiefs, sower of troubles, if you *are* the angel that you are pictured, why don't you fly to your own sphere; or, if for any great crime, like Lucifer's, for instance, you were kicked from heaven and cannot get back again, would it not be well, in mercy to weak-headed and tender-hearted men, to dispense with your eyes—to take them out and lay them aside, during your sojourn in this world? But, no; such a sacrifice to human comfort would be too much to expect. You know your power, and maliciously delight in using it. What is man's peace, happiness, enjoyment to you, who, like artful sprites, take pleasure in tormenting him before his time? If I only had my will with you, I'd ship you all to some foreign country, where the inhabitants are each compelled to wear their age upon their forehead, and to die without benefit of clergy, or I'm no Christian! But, soft!" he exclaimed, stooping down, and laying his hand gently upon the breast of the defeated marquis, "was not that a sigh from my late friend? What—another? Life is not all gone. With a surgeon's aid, he may yet live. I'll bear him to the nearest house. Help, ho—help!"

Shortly after breakfast, Leon, while meditating in his chamber on his affair with the marquis, was interrupted by the entrance of the master of the inn, who, carefully closing the door, observed:

"Pardon me, senor, but there is a poor youth without, whom I would recommend to your notice. He came last night to Toledo, in search of a place; but as he is a stranger, I thought it would be a humane act to introduce him to your honor, who might perhaps be able to take him into your service, and thereby save him from falling into our city's evil ways. Will your honor be so kind as to give him an audience?"

"An audience, certainly," answered Leon; "but I will not promise further."

"I ask no more," said the host. "Once give him your ear, and his artless manner will conquer you, as it has captured me. I have been talking with him this hour or more; and while he spoke, I could not clean my bottles, nor count up my reckonings, for listening to the music of his voice. I would take him to hire myself, but that it would be a sin to let so innocent a lad come within the contagion of an inn." Then opening the door, he added, "Come in, Paul; his honor will give you a hearing. There, boy—don't be afraid. The senor is an honest gentleman, and will treat you kindly. Nay, don't blush and hang your head. Look and speak up like a soldier. We denizens of the city are not such terrible fellows. We have hearts, and know how to give a bit of bread to a passing wayfarer, as well as country folks. So, though in Toledo, yet think yourself among Christians, and take courage."

"I will, senor," said the boy, looking up at the good inn-keeper with a half-timid smile.

"That's right, my brave lad—that's right. I'll leave you now with his honor, who will have consideration for your youth, and treat you kindly. So keep up your courage."

With these words, the honest landlord left the room, and softly closed the door.

"What is it, gentle youth?" asked the ex-secretary, in the genial tone of one who sympathizes with his kind.

"I am a poor boy, senor," answered the latter, modestly looking down, "without father or mother, and would esteem it a privilege to enter your service."

"What! thrown so young upon the world!" exclaimed Leon, pityingly. "Poor youth! The battle of life calls for an older head and stronger limbs than yours!"

"True, senor," said the lad. "But I was early taught that there is One above who watcheth alike over the orphan and the widow.'

"A holy faith!" observed Leon. "Cherish it, and you will be protected to the end of your days."

"Would your honor kindly take me into your service?" said Paul, blushing, as though at his own boldness.

"Alas, poor youth! you ask that of one who is out of sorts with fortune, and who till now has been himself a servitor!"

"I feel that I should wish no better or kinder master, senor!"

"You would find only hard fare, my poor boy," said Leon, touched at the voice in which this was spoken, "and I fear poorer wages. I have but a scant supply of money, am without any settled home, and know not where my to-morrow shall be. You see, therefore, that a service like mine would not be worth the taking!"

"Others might think so, your honor; but I do not," said the lad. "I would follow you to the end of the world, and think my labor amply recompensed if you would now and then kindly condescend to favor me with a smile."

"Boy!" exclaimed Leon, in mingled agitation and surprise.

"I saw you last night, senor," faltered Paul, "as you sat musing in the dining-hall, and I thought how I should like to have the power to beguile you of the great sorrow that appeared to be sitting on your heart! I know I am very simple; but I would rather serve your honor than any other master in or out of Spain."

"Who are you, boy?" demanded Leon, after a few moments of thought "Methinks I've seen your face before!"

"I am a poor orphan, senor, as I have already said; with no tie to bind me to any particular spot, and free and willing to go wherever my master—if you'll be he—may be led by fortune. If you are not he, why then I'll take hire from none other, but will retrace my steps to whence I came, and lay me down under some moss-grown rock and die."

"But I tell you, boy, I'm not of those that can afford to employ the less favored of their kind. The poorest gentleman that stints his valet in board and raiment is not more needy than I!"

"I can work for both, your honor, if that will do. I am used to toil; it is my heritage; and those who know me have often said that I am as apt as willing. Do not say me nay, senor. I do not care for other wages than the privilege of being near your honor, and of sharing such crust, be it bitter or sweet, as heaven, in answer to our prayers, may send down daily to your board!"

"No, boy—no," said Leon, presently, "it is impossible. If I knew that I should have a habitation, or means wherewith to provide one, a month hence, or two—or three, I would cheerfully grant your request. But my future is dark and uncertain; and for me to deliberately involve another in the skein of my formless fate, would be cruel and unwise. It would not do, my poor boy—it would not do!"

"But I will serve you without wages, your honor; yea, be mine own provider. I have a few crowns, enough to buy a mule with if we should travel, and also to keep me in food and garments. Nay, should your honor's purse give out, mine will help to replenish it, and when both are empty, I can work for more."

"Boy, you are unmanning me!"

"I have talents, your honor, that you will not find in every boy. I can read and sing to you when you are oppressed and sad. In my native village some called me 'The Little Notary,' I reasoned and read so well; and others, 'The Little Linnet,' because I sang so sweetly. I say not this in mine own praise, but to let your honor see that, if you will kindly let me follow your fortunes, I can help to make your hours blither than if you pushed on alone. I can tell legends also, yea, and jests, to wile away your weariness; and if you should be ill, I can make healing balsams and choice, cooling drinks, grateful to the palate and the nostrils, and play at once the doctor and the nurse, and so screen you from needless suffering and expense, and help you on your feet, and keep you on them, too, once your malady is gone. I pray your honor to give me a trial, and if I prove not all—yea, a hundred fold more than I have said, why, then, cast me on the wayside like a senseless clod, and notice me no more!"

This was said so entreatingly, and with such an air of modesty withal, that the ex-secretary's naturally gentle heart was shaken.

"I have never been in a position to take another to hire, my poor boy," he said, "and I fear that the condition of my resources, slenderer now than ever, will not warrant me in acceding to your request. I, of course, could not assent to your serving me without payment, nor to using your little means, nor yet to your being your own provider. Such a course would be mortifying to you and humiliating to me. But a thought strikes me!"

"In my favor, your honor?" asked the youth, eagerly and smiling with hope.

Leon bowed, and continued—

"Can you write as well as read?"

"Yes, your honor. I have helped my father, a poor lawyer, to prepare his papers ere now, and our village padre, patting me on the head, calls me 'the little scrivener.'"

"Then I may perhaps serve you, boy My late mistress, Donna de la Montera, whose employ I left but yesterday, cannot yet, I fancy, have supplied my post; in which case it is possible she might be glad to avail herself of your labor"

The youth shook his head with a sad smile.

"I'll serve no woman," he said, his eyelids glittering with dew, "nor man either, if your honor is not he."

"But you will be well cared for there," said Leon. "The lady is rich, and pays good wages; is kind, too, to those she likes, and gives them privileges and advantages which few servants have. The system of the household is pleasant and attractive to minds of taste, everything being plenteous and in good order. You would like the place, boy."

"Was the lady kind to you, senor?"

"Very kind, my lad."

"Why then did your honor leave her? You had a rupture?"

"No, boy—no rupture But there were reasons why it was better I should look for bread elsewhere. You'll accept the place, if it be offered to you? Say yes, and I will take the liberty of writing a note to the lady, who may grant you an audience, when you can plead your own cause."

"Have you any influence with the lady, senor?"

"None. I question if, on reading my note, she would recognize my name, without meditating a second time. Great ladies are not supposed to know their servants—the social distance between them is too great. My only hope would lie in her remembering that she is in want of a secretary to supply the place of the one who left her yesterday."

The youth looked at him a few moments with an indescribable expression, and then observed—

"I would prefer your honor's service to that of any person in the world."

"But you would be better lodged and clothed with Donna de la Montera, boy. She has stables, and if you now and then should wish to ride—as what lad of your years does not?—you can select your own steed. There are young, fair maidens in her hire, too, who doubtless would rejoice to have you for a companion in their walk. Think of all this!"

"I do, senor," said the youth, with modest firmness. "But rags and a hard crust with you, to velvet and plenty with any other."

"Say you so, my poor boy? then be it as you wish."

The youth, with a cry of joy, threw himself at the young man's feet.

"Nay, not there," continued the ex-secretary, opening his arms, "but here! Henceforth, you shall be my younger brother, and our fortunes count as one."

"O! your honor has made me so happy!"

"Forget that word, which becomes me not," said the young man with smiling gentleness, "and simply call me Leon."

"Leon! A sweet name! On my heart it rings like vesper music? And you will call me Paul?"

"We'll be to each other only Paul and Leon," said the ex-secretary, affectionately. "Why do you weep?"

"My joy will kill me!"

"Take courage, Paul. Joy does not kill. You see how readily I take to your name! But here is money. Go and divert yourself awhile in looking at the city. Return at noon, when I will have a horse for you. We start to-day for Madrid."

"To-day?"

"Is that too soon for you?"

"O, no. Your time is mine—your will mine—your desire mine. I have no thought, no impulse that does not follow yours, Leon!"

"That's right. Call me Leon, or brother, which you will. You will want a sword. Buy one to suit yourself. Why do you blush?"

"I have never worn a sword!"

"But it is time you should. Have you never fought with your village mates?"

"Not much," answered the youth, smilingly, dropping his eyes. "My parents ever taught me that the peaceful spirit, which lends dignity to the man, doth equally become the child."

"And they taught you truly, Paul. But unhappily most whom we meet are unfortunate in their parents, who, not having yet themselves emerged from the barbarism of their untutored ancestors instil only their own brutish instincts into their offspring, and we must be prepared to defend ourselves from these. Get you a good rapier, and I will daily give you a lesson in its use. But stay; you can have no judgment in the selection of a blade, and I had better purchase it myself. Go and amuse yourself, therefore, till noon, when I will have all things in readiness for our journey. Embrace me, Paul, and when you return, be sure you call me 'brother!'"

The youth retired, weeping and trembling with happiness, and the ex-secretary was again alone.

"The cares and perplexities of my life have begun," he murmured. "My love without a hope—my father suffering from persecution, and gone I know not where—and this poor boy to provide for and protect! Truly, fortune delights in filling my cup to the brim. But why despond? It is poor blood that gives way without a struggle. Success is worth a manly effort, and will not come without. Therefore, up, heart! and let's see what courage shall wring from fate!"

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

HORRIBLE FESTIVAL IN AFRICA.

The prescribed ablutions having been performed, says the celebrated traveller who witnessed the festival, the Aisaoua, standing in meditative postures, recited eight times the Mussulman profession of faith—"I bear witness that there is none other god than God, and that Mohammed is his Prophet." In their voices there was something grave and solemn, which was most impressive. The Mokaddam, or chief of the sect, then chanted a prayer for all Mussulmen, and called down upon them the benedictions of the Prophet. At the end of each prayer the Mokaddam stopped, and the Aisaoua, lifting up their voices in turn, asked health for one, or the blessing of maternity for another, and the chorus then taking it up, addressed a prayer to God, in accordance with the favor demanded. Incense was every now and then thrown on a brazier of live coals, and the chorus repeated in a loud voice, "*Es-salah! Es-salah!*" They then all seated themselves in a circle, leaving a vacant space in the centre of the court. The Mokaddam and his chief assistants took their places opposite to me, and at their side a dozen Aisaoua arranged themselves, each armed with an enormous tambourine, which they beat in cadence, while the chorus vociferated a song in honor of Ben-Aissa. There was in these songs an undefinable spirit of frantic rage, which produced in me a certain impression of terror I saw some of these fanatics roll enormous serpents in the hollow of their tambourines, while live adders reared their hideous heads from the hoods of their bernous, and, dropping to the floor, glided over the marble as cold as themselves. In spite of the horror which I felt at this sight, curiosity got the better of my disgust, and I remained.

At the sound of this barbarous music, one of the party rushed into the circle with a frightful cry and extended arms, as if possessed by the evil one He made the round several times, roaring hoarsely and savagely, then, as if compelled by a supernatural power, he began to dance to the sound of tambourines and drums. He was then clothed in a white bernou, and his "shasheah" (red woollen cap) being taken off, the long hair left on the top of an Arab's head fell over his shoulders. He then commenced his "*zeekr.*" The zeekr is a species of religious dance, which consists in jerking the head from right to left, so that it touches the shoulders alternately. The whole body of the Aisaoua was in motion, his eyes soon became red and bloodshot, and the veins of his neck blue and distended; nevertheless he continued his terrific dance. On a sudden two others rose up, and with savage yells, joined the first. The three, excited by each other, redoubled their stampings and the motion of their heads, working themselves up into a state of frenzy impossible to describe. Now calling for red hot iron, small shovels, the broad part the size of the hand, with long iron handles, were given to them. Seizing each one, these enthusiasts, placing one knee on the ground, applied their hands, and even their tongues, to the red hot metal. One of them, more madly excited than his companions, placed the brightest portion of the instrument between his teeth, and held it in that position for upwards of thirty seconds.

Let not the reader think that I exaggerate; I witnessed all that I relate; and in order to impress the scene stronger on my memory, the performer of this last act placed himself directly opposite to me with a lighted taper in his hand. It is impossible for me to give a reason for what I saw, but I cannot disbelieve it; I smelt the stench of the burnt flesh, and when I afterwards touched their hands and feet, I found only a fresh and uninjured skin. The sight of one old man nearly sixty-five years of age, gave me great pain; he grasped the red-hot iron, and placing it on his leg, allowed it to remain there until a whitish smoke arose, which filled the whole house with its poisonous odor.

These dances lasted, in this manner, for the space of an hour. Notwithstanding the noise produced by the songs and the tambourines, the painful rattle in the throats of these mad fanatics could be distinguished amidst the din; at last, exhausted by fatigue, they fell backwards, one after the other, and lay senseless and motionless on the ground; the songs ceased, and nothing broke the solemn silence but the sound of their heavy breathings. A man, whose task it was to attend the half-dead wretches, now advanced, and placing his foot successively on the pit of their stomachs, pressed their sides strongly, kneaded their limbs, and caused them to revive.

The dance recommenced · four fresh Aisaoua rushed into the circle, and were soon in the same state of frenzy as their predecessors, striking their heads with the red-hot shovels and stamping upon them with their naked feet. Then, in their delirium, imagining that they were transformed into camels and lions, they uttered the cries of the animals they represented, and feigned a combat between them; their mouths foamed and their eyes sparkled with rage. The Mokaddam now presented to them a leaf of cactus, of which the thorns, an inch in length and sharp as a needle, made me tremble. At this sight the combat ceased, the Aisaoua threw themselves upon the cactus, they tore and ground it between their teeth, making the air resound with a hoarse noise resembling the horrid cries of an enraged camel. At this moment the women, placed in the upper gallery, raised their dismal cry of *lu-lu, lu-lu, lu-lu.*

This frightful scene was only the prelude to all the horrors I was about to witness. Towards eleven o'clock the songs ceased, and coffee and couscousoo were brought in, of which I found it impossible to partake. The repast over, they recited a prayer before recommencing their dance; and, on the musicians beginning to strike their enormous tambourines, seven or eight of the disciples rose, howling dreadfully, and dressed in white like their predecessors, began to perform the zeekr.

My acquaintance, Bou-Chama, was of this party, and, taking a bundle of small wax tapers, he placed first his hand, and then his arm, face and neck in the flames. His features, when thus lit up, as they appeared from one moment to another through the varying flames, had quite a demoniacal appearance.

In the meantime, a negro had amused himself by placing live coals in his mouth, which as he breathed, burnt brightly, and sent forth a thousand sparks. Without having been there, it is impossible to realize the terrific sight I had before my eyes. Opposite me, within two paces, was the negro, whose glowing mouth displayed itself in a black and hideous face—his head, with its single lock of crisp woolly hair, vibrating rapidly from side to side—and around me the hellish music, the convulsive stampings, and the frightful cries of the dancers.

The negro was now in a state of the most furious excitement. Swallowing the still burning contents of his mouth, he seized a large scorpion, full of life and venom; placing it on his arm, he irritated the reptile in every possible manner, pinching it, putting it near the taper, and burning one of its claws. The enraged animal darted his sting into the offered hand; the negro smiled, and raising the scorpion to his mouth, I heard it crack between his teeth, and, as he swallowed it, I turned my head aside in horror. The reader, perhaps, supposes that the scorpion was deprived of its sting, but I had ocular demonstration to the contrary; nay, more, I might have brought one from the Boud-jareeah myself and given it with my own hand, as many have done who have been admitted to these "Hadrah."

A yatagan was now brought, the point wrapped in a handkerchief, and two men held it horizontally about three feet from the ground On seeing this, a man rose from his seat and commenced his zeekr, then uncovering his breast he sprang with all his weight on the naked blade; it seemed as if his body would have been cut in two by such a blow. He remained, however, with his bare breast on the sharp edge of the sabre, balancing himself with his feet, in a horizontal position, and tranquilly continuing his zeekr.

Meanwhile the four other Aisaoua continued their furious dance, beating their heads with the iron shovels brought to a red heat. To these, three others soon joined themselves, grasping in each hand a living adder, with which they struck their bodies. As they danced, the serpents wound themselves about their limbs, hissing horribly. Then, seizing them, some placed them in their mouths, so as only to permit the head of the reptile to escape; one even forced the adder to bite his tongue, and leaving it thus suspended, continued his dance. Others squeezed them between their teeth to increase their rage; and the irritated reptiles, in their desperate struggles to escape, twined around their necks, and hissing, reared themselves above the heads of their tormentors.

Excited by the spectacle before their eyes, and by the increasing noise of the music, the Aisaoua rose in a body and rushed to take a part in the dance.

Then commenced a scene which words cannot describe. Twenty Aisaoua, clothed in white bernous, with dishevelled hair and haggard eyes, mad with excitement and fanatacism, bathed in sweat, and grasping serpents in their hands, stamping, dancing, and convulsively shaking their heads, each starting vein swollen and distended with blood. The women, like phantoms, assisting in this scene, lit only by a pale and solitary taper, uttered in a piercing tone their shrill cries of *lu-lu-lu-lu-lu-lu*; this, mixed with strange songs, hoarse sounds, and the hollow rattle in the throat of each Aisaoua, as he fell exhausted and senseless, formed altogether a scene so totally repulsive to human nature, that it seemed in truth a feast of hell.

Such dreadful exertions could not, however, last long: by degrees the number of dancers diminished, as one after another they sank under the fatigue, and their panting bodies strewed the marble pavement of the court. The feast of the Aisaoua was over.

AN AWKWARD BEDFELLOW.

A circumstance recently occurred while a party of settlers were digging a well in Australia, that made a great sensation. One of the men employed, while sleeping in a hammock suspended between two trees, was disturbed during the night by something dragging away the blanket that covered him; and on looking over the side of the hammock, he discovered, to his intense horror, that the intruder was a large alligator. His shouts alarmed the animal, which retreated in great haste into the sea. The man's story was not at first credited by those who came to his assistance; but in the morning, sure enough, the blanket was found on the beach half immersed in water, and the animal itself was shot a few nights afterwards, the ball striking the forehead above the eye, and splintering off a portion of the skull, thus exposing the brain. He did not die, however, until after a violent struggle of many minutes, during which he lashed the sea around him into a foam.

THE POET'S BAKQUET.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

As in wine and music the midnight goes,
And the wind sings low to the sleeping rose,
A star comes out in the clouds above,
And smiles like a sleepless spirit of love.

Alone in the heaven and strangely light
It stands in the boundless gloom of night,
Though the clouds rush by in a shadowy train,
And the pine trees shrink from the wind and rain.

The music faints in the crowded heart,
And the lamps burn low and the guests depart,
And the flowers that watched with a drooping grace,
All faded, fall from each fragrant vase.

The poet stands in the glimmering light,
And gazes afar through the gloomy night
With a flushing cheek and a fiery eye,
As the train of tempests goes rushing by.

The storm-bell tolls from the distant cloud,
And the winds go past in a wailing crowd;
But no flashing fires on the sky are viewed—
The star is alone in the solitude.

The poet gazes again and again
On the star that stands in the gloom and rain;
Then turns to the banquet's lonely scene
With a weary step and a troubled mien.

He raises the chalice of crimson wine,
And murmurs above its Circean shine:
"My star! the truest and brightest star!"
And flings the cup he has drained afar.

The tempests hush and the clouds all part,
And a silence falls in the poet's heart,
While an angel floats from her smiling mates,
And bears him away to the star that waits.

THE LEIGHS.

A LIFE LEAF BEFORE UNWRITTEN.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Imagine a fair rural scene, a broad fertile valley, glorious in summer hues. A stream with many a capricious curve, ripples and prattles along its gravelly bed, through the midst of this valley, whirling in miniature eddies, or leaping up to lave the white, gleaming sands upon its narrow beach. There are clumps of noble trees, and alders and flowering vines, and plants that love the water-side; there are deep verdant dells, and brown slopes of pasture land, and yellow wheat fields, and green rows of the Indian corn rustling its long pennons in the soft breeze. There are fat kine, with great, gentle eyes, that have sought the brook, and stand lazily in the shade, while the water ripples against their sleek sides. There is a distant sound of voices that tells that human habitation is near, and a blue curling smoke-wreath above the low trees of yonder grove that points out its locality—the song of the cricket and the grasshopper, the tinkle of the bells from among the herd, are the only sounds beside. High hills shut in the valley, whose sides are resting places for brown shadows, and whose heads repose lovingly against the encircling sky that stoops to the embrace.

Over all the scene is quietness and peace, and the two human figures that walk in its midst do not mar the pleasant impression. Slowly they face the green banks of the stream—the youth's arm encircles the maiden's waist, so slender and pliant, her pretty hand rests upon his broad shoulder, the pedestal of a noble head. They are not talking; they are silent and happy in the sweet egotism of love, that expanded egotism which adds the "other me" to ourself, and fills and peoples the whole world thus, thinking only of themselves and the fullness of their joy.

To-morrow they are to be married, and now they are taking the last of those long quiet rambles among the peaceful and lovely scene in which the maiden's life had been spent. The influence of those scenes had been around her all her life, she had grown to be like them—fair, and quiet, and lovely. Her lover had come from the great city, from amidst its rush, and din, and clamor; from amidst the wild clashing of human passions, and the fierce onset of the greed of gain, and the wily strifes of the lust of power. He was like his fellows there—here his soul became gradually attuned to the harmonies of nature, for his was a restless, changeful spirit of plastic material, ready to take fashioning from any mould, ready to yield to any influence the most immediately powerful.

The maiden believed him to be all and what he seemed. And so he was *then*—his gentleness, his peacefulness, his talk of aims and hopes were to him then just as real as the footprints they were leaving in the white brook sands. The waves would soon wash them away, and so would the torrent of active, writhing life obliterate the impressions he had taken from the quiet scenes amidst which he had lingered in a strange content for many weeks. Happy had it been for him and that sweet girl could he have remained forever in the peaceful valley!

Out of that silent trance of happiness the horn that summoned to the household supper aroused them. They hastened their steps homeward, for the maiden would not fail to sit this evening beside her white-haired father at his plentiful board. The place had been hers for twenty years of infancy, and childhood, and womanhood. Soon it would be vacant, but not until she was far away.

It was a very silent meal. The laborers at the foot of the table spoke together in low voices, modulated with an instinctive delicacy to an accord with the sadness which pervaded their superiors. The lover talked gaily until, chagrined at meeting no response, he, too, subsided into silence.

But Martha Gladstone could not speak. The nice things with which her mother heaped her plate choked her, the tearful glance of those loving eyes penetrated her soul with remorse at the thought of leaving such a friend for the home and love of one all untried—of leaving loneliness where she had so long brought light and joy.

Very solemn and tender was the father's kiss that night upon the brow of his daughter, as he blessed her at the last evening parting beneath his roof. And when she had laid down for the last time in the little white bed, her mother came, stealing in in the darkness, to whisper those loving and lingering farewells, amid tears and sighs, for which there would be no other quiet hour. Both the father and mother were very sad at this parting, in truth, for they had penetrated the superficial character of Amadeus Leigh, and felt many an undefined, though not less agonizing fear, for the future of their beloved child. Nevertheless, they had consented, because they saw her happiness was deeply involved, and because they could point at no one incident in the career of Amadeus Leigh to justify their fears.

In the morning there was a wedding in the old farm-house, and, followed by a shower of congratulations, Amadeus Leigh and Martha, his wife, were borne away from the fair scene wherein their love had that summer had its birth.

Away to the great city they went, and then with a gay company of the friends of the bridegroom, his dashing sisters and their attendant beaux, all disposed to find amusement in the country breeding of the bride, but doing homage inevitably to her gentle loveliness, they proceeded on their bridal tour. And so for many weeks Martha lived in a wild whirl of excitement, seeing much and learning much that was new, and brushing off the down of her rustic simplicity in crowded hotels and ballrooms.

Very glad was she to return, at last, to the place which was henceforth to be her home, to settle down as she fondly imagined to the society of her husband, which truly was all she desired on earth. To be mistress of her own house, and such a house, with immense and lofty rooms, so unlike the low chambers of her maiden home, to sit at the head of her own table, with only her husband opposite, to have him all her own again—that would have been enough for her happiness. She knew little of the great world, and the glimpses she had gained of it during her summer pleasuring had not won her to love it.

But Leigh was made of other stuff. He had secured his prize, he had exhibited it to the gay world of the watering places, and, when the "season" commenced in town, would exhibit it to the gay world there. Now that there was an interregnum in the realm of fashion between sight-seeing and traveling, and the opera and parties, he was very willing to return to his old habits. His house was still a little better to him than a place to dine and sleep in—there was a novelty in having a house, and he loved to think when he was out, haunting the places he had been wont to frequent in his bachelorhood, that he could go to home and Martha when he was weary. Still he had not courage to face the ridicule which he knew would follow any detection of domestic tendencies.

While he frequented the clubs, and rode, and betted, and drank and played a little, Martha sat at home receiving the guests who called upon her—the friends of her husband's family who felt obliged to "take up" the little country girl, whom Amadeus Leigh had made his wife, because the circle in which the Leigh's moved was a good one, and the bride had been installed in a fine house, and would probably give parties. It was nothing to them, though much to poor Martha, that they had not an idea in common with her. And while she sat silent and constrained, with an expression of perplexity or weariness upon her fair countenance, her guests rattled away in sentences that might have been Greek to her as well, so little meaning did they often convey to her ear. The phraseology and nomenclature of fashionable life were as strange to her ear, as those of her rural home in the dear New England valley would have been to theirs.

Sometimes Martha walked or rode with the sisters or mother of her husband—dashing women of expensive habits, who sneered at the plainness of her tastes, and at her unconcealed dismay at their extravagance. In family conclave they voted her a simpleton and a dowdy, but hoped she might improve.

So Martha, even in the first months of her marriage, saw many lonely and some unhappy hours. Sometimes she felt that her mother's fears had been verified, and that she had chosen unwisely—not that her love for her husband had lessened—not that she had yet learned to doubt his devotion, but that she felt a growing belief that she should never accustom herself to the uncongenial associations by which she was surrounded. But all these feelings fled away at the sound of her husband's footsteps, and with his kiss upon her brow and lip they were all forgotten.

The winter passed in a round of gaiety. Simple Martha Gladstone, as the bride of Amadeus Leigh, exerting herself to please for her husband's sake, and that his family might not blush for her simplicity, became a belle and was toasted as the beauty of the season. Amadeus deemed himself a lucky fellow, as his friends told him every day that he was, and his family were even proud of her, and were very ready when a stranger inquired "who is that very lovely woman," to answer—"My daughter, or my sister, Mrs. Amadeus Leigh."

Summer saw Martha once more installed beneath the humble but dear roof of her old home. Leigh brought her there, and then went away to seek his pleasure in his wonted summer haunts. Not even Martha's presence could bring him the last summer's contentment amidst those quiet scenes now. He came often to see her, but as she was not strong enough to roam with him about the country, he soon grew weary and went his way again.

Thus it happened that when, in the darkness of a summer midnight, there was heard the wail of an infant in the old house, which had not echoed with such a sound in more than twenty years, the father was far away among his boon companions on some wild excursion, which Martha had vainly urged him to give up. There were hurry, and confusion, and the sound of sobs, and white tearful faces in the old house when the morning broke, for the mother was sinking rapidly, and it was feared that her sweet young life was to be exchanged for that of the little unconscious stranger by her side. With the first glimmer of the dawning a mounted messenger rode in hot haste along the valley road, speeding with the sad tidings in search of him whose place was vacant beside the couch of suffering.

A day and night of sad and fearful suspense followed. Then another day of watching wore to a close, and just as the sun was sinking behind the western hills Amadeus Leigh galloped into the court-yard. Martha heard the sound through the opened windows, and for the first time for many hours her eyes opened. He hurried in, and up the stairs with impatient bounds. His garments all travel-stained and dusty, his face haggard, his eyes bloodshot, his cheek pale with dread. He came in, he approached the bed, and a smile bright and glorious beamed over the white face that for hours had worn the stillness of death. He knelt down and kissed the pale lips and the soft hands too feeble to return the caress, and murmured words of tenderness, and prayers for forgiveness, and promises of future care into the ear that before had seemed unconscious of all sounds.

From that hour Martha recovered, for the beloved voice had recalled her from the very gates of death. In a few days she could smile upon her little one as it nestled in baby contentment in those gentle arms that had encircled her own infant form.

As soon as the danger was past, and Martha fairly convalescent, Leigh was impatient to be gone once more. The quiet and monotony of the sick chamber were irksome to him. He did not like to look upon Martha's pale face, and the little pink and white bundle of flannel and cambric had no charms for him. He could not be persuaded to take his baby in his arms, and when a cry came from the cradle where it lay he stopped his ears and rushed from the house. It gave Martha no surprise, then, when, long before she was able to leave her room, he talked of the necessity of keeping his engagement of joining his mother and sisters at Saratoga.

"He didn't see that he was of any use to her, she could not be in better hands than her mother's, and he might as well be off." Martha acquiesced, as she had learned to do, but loud were the indignant comments of Mrs. Gladstone, when one fine morning, he kissed his wife, patted the little pink cheek in the cradle and strode away, whistling, across the fields to catch the stage that passed along the valley-road.

Mrs. Gladstone had distrusted Amadeus Leigh before, now she had lost all confidence in him, and, had hate not been impossible to her gentle nature, would have hated him. She would do what she called "speaking her mind," and Martha, who could not quietly hear her husband blamed, was almost glad to leave the once happy home of her childhood and return once more to the city. An almost imperceptible coolness, arising perhaps out of her dread of her mother's jealous comments upon Leigh's conduct, arose between herself and those who had been for the first twenty years of her life her best and dearest friends. There was a long, weary lapse of time ere she again entered those doors. Her eldest born was a lad of fifteen when for the first time, since he was borne over it in his nurse's arms, he crossed the threshold of the old farmhouse.

Those fifteen years had been full of trial, of the bitterest and sharpest sorrows to Martha Leigh. The few first years of her misery were gilded over with luxury. Gemmed tiaras shone above a brow throbbing with secret anguish, rich silks rustled to the beatings of a heart oppressed with a thousand anxious fears.

We have seen how superficial and restless was the nature of Amadeus Leigh. The creature of impulse, with no purpose except in the achievement of his own selfish enjoyments, he was ready to be led into any path that promised pleasure, or what to him, early jaded by luxury and dissipation, took its place—excitement; and yielded always unresistingly to whatever force was strongest. His love for Martha Gladstone had been a sudden impulse, caused by the sight of her rare and gentle beauty. The same impulse led him to make her his wife, although an hour's reflection might have shown him how utterly uncongenial were his own habits and modes of life with those of the country maiden.

Her influence enthralled him a little time, and then he went back to his old pursuits. It took no long time for Martha to discover that her husband was an idle, reckless spendthrift. Afterward other revelations quickly followed, and she found that at the gaming table, and on the turf, and the other nameless haunts of dissipation he had lost a great portion of the splendid fortune his father had bequeathed him.

Martha was the mother of three children when they were forced to leave the house which had been her home since her marriage. She had been married five years then, and on the day they removed to a smaller and far more humble residence, she looked at her husband as he sat moodily in the small parlor and noted the change that had been wrought in him by the life he had led. The bloated face and tremulous hands told the secret of a growing love of strong drinks—there was the keen, greedy, watchful eye of the gambler, and a more than the olden restlessness that showed too plainly that he had lost all relish for a quiet life.

He was going very fast in the downward road, and Martha's visions of the future were very gloomy though she dreamed not of the half that was in store for her. She had hoped to have once more influenced him to right effort, for in their lowly fortunes they seemed drawn nearer each other than before; but her hope proved vain. For a little, a very little time he listened to her tender pleadings, he looked upon his children, and for their sake and for hers resolved to do some deed for the retrieval of their fortunes. But the temptation of the first glass came—a long debauch followed and washed away forever the memory of his feeble resolutions.

Ruin, and despair, and disgrace followed swiftly. The grasp of poverty grew closer and more chill. Martha toiled, and saved, and eked out the pittance left of their fortune to the last, making much of the fitful bounties of the Leighs—crumbs from the table of their luxury—but what can a mother do with four little ones (and Martha had four now) clamoring for the supply of all their wants? Added to these cares were those caused by the man who called her wife—a poor creature, too lazy to work, but not to deal out blows and curses in his household—too proud to beg, but not to steal the pittance won by his wife's toil, or conveyed to her from those in the old home who mourned her fate, and compassionated her sorrows.

Sometimes Leigh would absent himself for weeks and months from the poor home that sheltered his family. These absences came to be blessed oases in Martha's weary pilgrimage—brief seasons of peace if not of rest—for her there was no longer any rest. During one of these absences Martha heard the tidings of her father's death. She mourned for him, sorrowing that she had not been near to receive his last blessing, and to close his eyes.

Next came the tidings that she was now the inheritor of the old homestead and its broad acres. She prepared at once to journey thither with her children. And thus it was that she once more returned to the places which had known her in her joyous and beautiful youth. She had taken such precautions in her removal that she supposed Leigh would be unable to trace her. But scarcely had she become settled with her children in their new home, than he appeared upon the scene, ready, by virtue of his legal rights, to take possession of his wife's inheritance. The law did not recognize the right of a wife to her own inherited property any more than to her earnings, and Martha, whose small savings, the fruits of bitter toil, had been more than once thus legally filched from her, saw in prospect her fair inheritance and the home to which she had so gratefully brought her children, already snatched from her and transferred to the hands of those to whom her husband owed his ruin.

She had clung to him through wrong and shame, through evil report and misery, patiently and uncomplainingly. She had borne much, how much none but God and other women suffering like her, can tell, but the extreme verge of endurance had now been reached.

She sought and obtained a divorce. The property was secured to her and her children by judicial decision, and saved from the harpies of the gambling-houses and bar-rooms, whose claws were ready to grasp it. A comfortable subsistence was assigned by Martha to the unworthy Leigh, who soon after died, ending his career mournfully, but fitly, in a low drinking-house. Martha's eldest son cultivates the old farm. His mother, from whose placid brow some peaceful years have erased many a furrow worn by care and sorrow, is still at the head of the household. She is happy once more—the Past is like a dream of sorrow and fear; but the Present is full of joys and compensations.

She walks again in the long summer afternoons beside the valley-brook, drinking in great draughts of peace from the fair and beautiful scene around her. Memories arise—joyous ones of her happy youth—of the bright season of her love, and a sadder strain sighs through the melody they make among her heart-chords, but does no longer lessen its sweetness. She gazes upon the tall form by her side—a youth in the beautiful morning of his manhood, handsome as Amadeus Leigh, who lies now in his drunkard's grave, was twenty years ago; but with deep, earnest eyes, and the impulse of lofty thought and unflinching purpose upon his noble brow.

And he, with tender reverence for the mother who guided him through the perils of his unhappy youth, walks beside her, his strong arm supporting her footsteps, love beaming upon her worn face from his earnest eyes, grateful for the peaceful home in that fair valley, and sighing not for the mad excitements that led his father on to ruin.

The morning of Martha Gladstone's life was fair, clouds overcast its noontide, but its calm setting sun shining through the rainbow of her long shed tears, gives promise of a blissful future, where the "wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

STORY OF A DOLPHIN.

There is in Africa a town called Hippo, near the sea coast; it stands upon a navigable lake, from whence a river runs into the main ocean, and ebbs and flows with the sea. Persons of all ages divert themselves here with fishing, sailing, or swimming, especially boys, whom love of play and idleness bring hither. The contest among them is who shall have the glory of swimming the farthest; and he that leaves the shore and his companions at the greatest distance, gains the victory. It happened in one of these trials of skill, that a certain boy, more bold than the rest, launched out towards the opposite shore. He was met by a dolphin, who sometimes swam before him, and sometimes behind him, and then played around him, and at last took him upon his back, then set him down, and afterwards took him up again; and thus he carried the poor frighted boy out into the deepest part, then immediately he turns back again to the shore, and lands him among his companions. The fame of this remarkable event spread through the town, and crowds of people flocked round the boy to ask him questions, and hear him relate the story. The next day the shore was lined with multitudes of spectators, all attentively contemplating the ocean and the lake. In the meanwhile the boys swam as usual, and among the rest the youth I am speaking of went into the lake, but with more caution than before. The dolphin again appeared, and came to the boy, who, together with his companions, swam away with the utmost precipitation. The dolphin, as it were, leaped and dived up and down, darting about in a thousand different convolutions. This he practised for several days together, till the people, accustomed from their infancy to the sea, began to be ashamed of their timidity. They ventured, therefore, to advance nearer, playing with him and calling him to them, while he, in return, suffered himself to be touched and stroked. Use rendered them more courageous; the boy in particular, swam by the side of him, and leaping upon his back, was carried about in that manner; thus they gradually became acquainted and delighted with each other. There seemed now, indeed, to be no fear on either side;—the confidence of one, and the tameness of the other, mutually increasing: the rest of the boys in the meanwhile surrounding and encouraging their companion. It is very remarkable that this dolphin was followed by a second, which seemed only as a spectator, and attendant on the other; for he did not at all submit to the same familiarities as the first, but only conducted him backwards and forwards, as the boys did their comrade. But what is rather surprising, this dolphin who thus played with the boys, and carried them upon his back, would come upon the shore, dry himself in the sand, and as soon as he grew warm, roll back again into the sea. Octavius Avitus, deputy governor of the province, actuated by an absurd piece of superstition, poured some precious ointment over him as he lay on the shore, the novelty and smell of which made him retire into the ocean; and it was not till after several days that he was seen again, when he recovered his strength and continued his usual playful tricks. All the magistrates round the country flocked hither to view this sight; the entertainment of them upon their arrival, and during their stay, was an additional expense, which the slender finances of this little community could ill afford, besides that the quiet and retirement of the place was utterly destroyed. It was thought proper to remove the occasion of this concourse, by privately killing the poor dolphin.

EXTRAORDINARY PHENOMENON.

A Malta paper says that some parts of Sicily have been lately visited by dreadful tornadoes, which have caused considerable damage to the plantations to the westward of the island, tearing up trees by the roots, and driving everything before them. In a plantation of 25,000 olive trees, only a few dozens are remaining. A similar thing occurred at our island on Friday last, between three and four P. M., at St. Antonio, Balzan, Attard, and other places to the westward. The atmosphere on a sudden became obscured, and immediately afterward blew a perfect hurricane. Some say it was the effect of a water-spout. Trees in St. Antonio gardens and in the vicinity were torn up by the roots. A sentry in his box on guard at St. Antonio was carried away, box and all, which hurt the man very much. A small child, it is said, was actually borne away in the village of Attard, and, we believe not yet heard of. Carts were literally sent into the air. A large quantity of barley prepared in a field for treading out, was all swept away, and not a grain to be seen. Two massive iron bars of the gate of St. Antonio were broken in pieces; the gate was closed, but opened by the force of the wind. The garden of Mr. Clincham adjoining St. Antonio was completely destroyed; trees rooted up, and others broken, about sixteen large stone columns smashed to pieces, and the garden strewed with straw and bits of lavender, brought from some distant place. We have not heard all the particulars relating to this affair, but we are given to understand the damages to be much greater than what have come to our knowledge. In parts of the country rain had fallen in torrents, which made the roads the following morning in some parts impassable.

"MEANING" AND "DOING" WELL.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude; and so willing is every man to flatter himself, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himself zealous in the cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than as they conform to his own desires; and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

BLOOD BATHS.

A belief in the cleansing and purifying virtues of *human* blood appears to have existed from very remote times, until, comparatively, a recent period. That it prevailed amongst the Egyptians we learn from Pliny, and the idea seems to have been borrowed from them by Moses, although it became modified in his code, the blood of animals being substituted for that of human beings. In the twenty-eighth book of the "Natural History," of the Roman author, we find a curious account of leprosy, which concludes thus:—"A peculiar malady is this, and natural to the Egyptians; but when any of their kings fell into it, woe to their subjects and poor people, for then were the tubs and bathing vessels, wherein they sat in the bath, filled *with men's blood for their cure*."

But the remedial powers of human blood were not supposed to be confined to cases of leprosy alone; it was a medicine of universal application, a fancy which probably grew out of some vague notion that the vital principle resided in this fluid.

It is a singular fact that while the Jewish legislator imparted a sacrificial virtue to the blood of animals, the Romans should, on the contrary, have adopted a belief the very reverse. According to the Pagan theory, the blood of horses is venomous, and that of bulls is no better, except at Ægira, a city of Achaia, though why this spot should be an exception to the general rule, the Roman naturalist does not inform us. Goats' blood also he denounces, and adds that it is so strong, nothing in the world will sharpen the edge of an iron tool sooner, nor harden it when keen, and that it will polish steel better than any file.

The Christians in the middle ages unaccountably adopted the Pagan rather than the Jewish belief. The Emperor Constantine, it is true, was restrained from using this revolting remedy in consequence of a *vision*, and is said to have been cured by baptism; but the use of the blood-bath seems to have been by far too common both in ancient times and in the middle ages.

In the time of the great leprosy the belief must have given occasion to numberless cruelties, more especially as children and maidens were the objects of it—a class the least likely to be able to escape from the sacrifice demanded of them. After a time, however, it received a check, from an opinion gradually gaining ground that only the blood of those would be efficacious, who offered themselves freely for a beloved sufferer. One of the most beautiful poems of the thirteenth century, written by Hartman Von Der Ane, gives proof of the popular notions of the period. The outlines of the story are nearly as follows:—"A Swabian knight, who possesses wealth, rank, fame—all in short that can make life desirable, is on the sudden seized with leprosy. In order to escape the civil death, which was one of the most terrible results of the disease, he roams through the world in the hope of somewhere finding a remedy, and Montpelier being in those days famous for its physicians, it is there that he first seeks assistance. They pronounce his case to be beyond their art, and he then repairs to Salerno, where he is made acquainted with the apparently hopeless means of cure—namely, that he should bathe in the blood of some child, or of some virgin, who shall submit to be a willing sacrifice. Sad at heart, he returns home, with the conviction that such terms of cure leave him no hope, and he therefore prepares himself to sorrow out the remainder of his days in solitude. It is now that a girl of twelve years of age, the daughter of a countryman, conceives a passion for the knight while attending upon him, and accidentally hearing of this free-will offering, determines to become his sacrifice. The knight, struck by the poor girl's attachment, at first refuses to avail himself of it, but her devotion is proof against all persuasions, and they set out together for Salerno, the site of a celebrated medical institution established by the Benedictine monks. The fatal catastrophe, however, is averted by the knight's recovery through other means, and in requital for so much love he gives his hand to the maiden in marriage."

The story of Amicus and Amelius is another of the same kind; and there is a similar tale related of Louis XI., having a mind to avoid his approaching death by drinking the blood of young children. The account given of the last hours of this king by the historian Gaguin bears testimony to this fact of the blood-drink. He thus states it:—"But his disorder still grew upon him, and in this year, 1443, imploring high and low the aid of God and man, he commanded that they should bring to Tours the sacred liquor, which it is said was sent from heaven to anoint King Clovis in his city of Rheims. Besides this, he had from the holy chapel at Paris the rod of the high priest Aaron, which many affirm to have been divinely given to Charlemagne. But there was nothing that could put off the appointed hour. Every day he grew worse and worse, and the medicines profited him nothing, though of a strange character, for he vehemently hoped to recover by the *human blood which he drank and swallowed from certain children*. But he died at Tours."

CHILDREN'S FOOD.

Physiologists, however they may differ as to the mere theory of digestion, all agree that the stomach as much needs rest from its work as any other organ or part of the body. The reason of this is, that its muscular coat undergoes the process of wear and tear in obedience to an unalterable law of our physical economy, and *itself* requires nutrition.

This being so, where do parents find a justification for the common custom of giving "pieces" to their children? If the digestive apparatus of adults requires repose for the reason stated, how much more that of the child? In the latter the process of growth is going on, as well as that of restoration. Growth depends, not on the quantity of food, but the degree of perfection which marks its assimulation, or conversion into the fluids and solids of the body—the blood, the muscles, the bones, &c. There should always be time fully to dispose of one meal before another is taken. To this end the length of time which elapses between the three meals of the family is seldom too long. It is oftener too short. Children's stomachs need the whole of it to digest their contents, if the proper quantity is not curtailed by the "piece" system, because of the natural appetite being unseasonably pampered. To shorten it, in the way of which we are complaining, is inevitably followed by mischief, because involving a positive infraction of physiological law. For this reason the "indulgence," which the, perhaps, well-enough-*intending* parent practices in this respect, is nothing short of cruelty. As such, no selfish purpose of "keeping the child quiet" can be held excusable. It only renders the cruelty more cruel.

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"DAD," said an incipient legislator to his indulgent parent, who had gratified him with a visit to the galleries of the Capitol, "say do you see any row going on? I don't." "No," said the astonished father, "of course not. Why did you ask?" "Cause the man in the big desk says—'the *eyes* have it!'—and just now he said the *nose* had it—so I thought there was some *fun* down there some'ers!"

TO MARY.

BY J. W. BRAZELL.

When the sweet morn's roseate beams
Sparkle through the wild-wood trees,
Setting gems with diamond gleams
O'er the tinted flower-leaves,
Fancy brings thee o'er the lea,
Bright and beautiful—to me.

And when sunset's clouds of gold,
At the silent, holy even,
Softly o'er the azure fold,
Lovely as a dream of heaven—
As an angel, memory
Brings thine image back to me.

And again, when regal night,
Flashing with its crown of stars,
Gilds the pine-clad mountain height,
Or some lone cliff's snowy spars—
Then bright dreams come silently,
Lov'd and beautiful—of THEE.

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FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 25.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER P. DUNLAP.

ADVENTURE WITH A LION.

Upon getting Uncle Abner drawn out we found that he had seen a great deal more of the world than we had supposed. He had spent nearly three years in Africa, part of the time trading between Mocha and Muskat, and the other part travelling. To be sure the two places above mentioned are in Arabia; but the old man still set those years down as having been passed on the dark-visaged continent. When asked why he kept such silence with regard to his adventures, he answered that he could not bear to be made the tale-maker for a whole community.

"Why," said he, "did the people hereabouts know where I had been, I should have no peace of life at all. I could not show my face at a store without being hailed for a story;—aye—and mittened, too; for one might as well try to get away from a nest of mad hornets as to think of escaping a squad of those loungers about a whiskey-bar."

However, we had found out his qualifications, and we were determined to have some of his adventures. He was perfectly willing; only he exacted from us the promise that we would not tell to any of the people of the neighborhood the secret he had thus far kept. As for being made the boon companion of the Shreveport loafers he would not; and should he refuse, when they had discovered his store of adventure, to drink and talk with them, they would vote him an aristocrat, and bother him exceedingly. We gave the pledge of secresy, and in return he gave us some of his adventures. The first was as follows:

"I had pocketed quite a little sum of money at Mocha, and took it into my head that I would visit the river Nile. Two Arabs, in whom I had the fullest confidence, and who had worked for me a great deal, agreed to accompany me if I would pay their expenses. Their expenses would probably amount to ten cents per day, for both of them; so I did not hesitate long on that score. Their names were Abdac and Mada. They were middle-aged men; tall and powerful; very intelligent; far more neat and cleanly than the majority of their kind; and not only trustworthy, but well acquainted with the country we were to traverse.

"We took a little coasting vessel from Mocha, and ran up the Red Sea to Suakin, a small town on the coast of Southern Nubia, where we landed and took horses. The distance from here to the Fifth Cataract of the Nile, below Berber, was about two hundred and forty miles; and the country to be travelled was a broad desert, dotted with mountains and some fine oases. We left Suakin early in the morning, and at night reached a small settlement called Demar, among the mountains. Our first day had not taken us beyond the mountain range of the coast.

"We found a place at which we could stop; and having seen our horses provided for we sat down to supper—a supper of coffee and bread, the latter made from wheat which had been cracked up between two stones. It was a wild looking place, being entirely shut in by high mountains, and even the trees appearing dark and sombre. We had eaten supper, and I was just lighting my pipe, when a party of some ten or a dozen natives went by the door, each one armed with a long pole. I told Abdac to ask what it meant. He did so, and the woman told him they were going after a lion that had been devouring their flocks.

"Here was a chance for me. I had never seen a lion in his freedom, but I had long felt a desire to do so. I quickly bade my companions to run after the men and ask them if we might go. Mada came back first with the intelligence that they would like to have me go, especially as I had a 'fire weapon,' as they called my rifle, which I had of course taken along with me, both for protection and amusement.

"I put on my belt, which I had removed while eating supper, and having secured my pistols and ammunition, I took my rifle and set out. I found the natives, eleven in number, waiting for me at a short distance, and as we walked along I learned from them, through Abdac, that for several days there had been a huge lion in the neighborhood, doing immense mischief. He had killed some of their best horses, and many goats; and thus far they had been unable to find him.

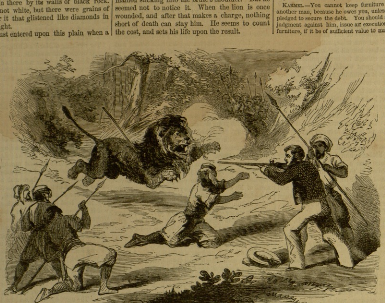
These natives were armed with long spears, something like common pike-poles. The handle was of tough, firm wood, an inch and a half to two inches in diameter, and armed at the extremity with an iron pike. Most of them had knives, but none of them possessed fire-arms.

"After we had gone some distance I learned that the lion was supposed to be in a certain cave not far distant; but that, if he was not there, they would not pursue him before morning, as the mountain gorges were wild and intricate, rendering a night-hunt exceedingly dangerous. The dogs, of which there were seven with the company, had already had two battles with the monster, and they were now willing to remain with us.

"We found the cavern, but no lion, and after searching awhile we returned to the village.

"Our accommodations at the hut of our hostess were as good as the village could afford; and though we had to sleep upon the ground, yet we slept soundly, and awoke in the morning much refreshed. When we had eaten our breakfast we found the party ready for setting out on the hunt. There were more than on the previous evening, nearly every well man in the place being present, and making a party of twenty-three. They were all armed with spears, and most of them had knives. We started in a body, the oldest man of the natives taking the lead.

"This time the dogs went ahead, part of them leaving us out of sight. We reached the cave where we had come the night before, and in it we found the bones of a goat newly picked, with other signs of the lion. This place was about three miles from the village, and at the entrance of a deep gorge which divided two high mountains, and where a stream of water seemed at some time to have run. Through this gorge we went, and at the distance of half a mile we came to a sand plain, not over a quarter-of-a-mile in diameter, and flanked on all hands by mountains. It was a curious spot to me. When I first saw it I took it for a little lake shut in there by its walls of black rock. The sand was not white, but there were grains of quartz all over it that glistened like diamonds in the morning light.



"We had just entered upon this plain when a sharp, frightened howl from one of the dogs startled us. We looked in the direction from whence the sound came, and saw a deep, narrow gorge, the mouth of which was well garnished by a stunted growth of a sort of hard, dry, gummy pine. We had just observed the place when the dog leaped from the gorge and rolled over upon his side, and then struggled to gain his feet. In a moment more, without warning of any kind, a huge, dark form leaped forth from the ravine—leaped high in the air—and struck the quivering dog.

"It was the lion! On the instant the air was filled with the shouts of the natives, and they danced to and fro in wild concert, brandishing their spears, and yelling at the top of their voices. At first I wondered what they were up to; but I afterwards learned that the dog was the most valuable one in the village—a faithful, generous animal—quite old, and looked upon as their trusty sentinel in all times of danger. Their hope was to frighten the lion away from him. But they were too late. The dog was past help.

"I tell you, boys, my heart beat quicker as I gazed upon that brute. I had seen a lion—three or four of them—in menageries—and I thought I knew something of their appearance. But I had only seen what might be set down as good-sized dogs when compared with the animal I then gazed upon. He had turned, and was facing us. He was huge in frame—certainly one-third larger than I had supposed they ever grew—his shaggy mane standing out with fierceness in every hair—his great eyes glaring like coals of fire;—his long tail moving slowly to and fro—and his unearthly roar breaking like thunder upon the still air of that deep vale.

"The voice of the lion is the only thing about him that confounds me. I can account for his strength, and for his agility; but how any pair of lungs, shut up within such a space, can send forth such a sound, seems next to incomprehensible. Were we to hear it from the elephant we might not be so much surprised, for his amazing bulk would more nearly accord with it. Surely I never heard the roar of thunder more powerful than was the mad, defiant roar of that lion. I have heard thunder louder, I suppose, but there never was more real body of tone to it.

"It was some moments before I could fairly bring my thoughts together. There was a sort of charm about the presence of the monster monarch that might have proved fatal to me under other circumstances; for I verily believe that, had he appeared to me unexpectedly, when alone, I should not have had the sense for self-protection. My admiration—my wonder—and the feeling of awe, all combined, would have held me entranced awhile in spite of danger.

"The chief turned to me as soon as they knew the dog was dead, and asked me to fire. I told Abdac to tell him I was not sure of killing him. 'Never mind,' was his reply, 'fire!'

"The lion was twenty rods distant. The aim was a good one, but what a game for me to bring down! However, I fired. I had aimed at his eye. The monster gave one leap sideways, as though to escape something—and then sent forth a roar that made the very mountains quake. I started to reload my rifle with one eye upon the lion. I worked smartly, for I did not feel wholly safe. If the brute knew who had fired, perhaps he might single his enemy out for especial vengeance. And what could the natives do with their spears against such an opposer? At least, so I thought to myself. But I found that I was somewhat mistaken touching the skill of my dusky companions.

"I had just shut the pan of my rifle, after having put in the priming, when the lion sprang forward. He came on at long, lightning-like springs, directly for me. Instinctively I started back and raised my rifle; but there was no need of my firing then. The natives—five of them—met him with their spear-points, and he retreated howling with rage, and bleeding from several wounds.

"I was surprised at the movement. I had not supposed it possible for five men, with only simple lances, to withstand successfully the onset of a full-grown Nubian Lion. But as I reflected upon it now I saw how simple it was. The natives had marked the monster's course, and arranged themselves accordingly, with their spear-points resting upon the sand; but at the proper moment the points were raised, and the desert monarch found himself half impaled upon weapons he had not seen.

"As the lion retreated five of the natives ran around to the mouth of the gorge whence he had come, and gained it in safety. He glared upon them a few moments, but gave them no further notice, turning again upon the objects of his first attack. He lay crouching upon the sand for some moments, and then started up. I never before saw such fearful rage depicted upon any face. His eyes glared like fire; his mouth was set half open, the lips curled and drawn into that terrible shape which marks the feline rage; and his great mane quivered with intense passion.

"There came one more roar—not loud and sharp, but deep and rumbling—and then he leaped forward. I feared that the spears would not stay him this time. He seemed to have counted the cost of the spring ere he took it, for I could see that every muscle in his whole huge body was strung for the charge. He came on—the spear-points were raised—and he received them in the breast. But not one of them penetrated deeply; nor did they stop him as before. He drove his opposers back as though they had been so many children, and with a mighty leap he sprung for the leader. The dogs, who had hung back all this while, barking furiously, now attacked him in the rear, but he noticed them not. Two of the spears he had broken; two were still held by their owners, while the fifth remained sticking into the brute's shoulder. But he seemed not to notice it. When the lion is once wounded, and after that makes a charge, nothing short of death can stay him. He seems to count the cost, and sets his life upon the result.

"As the monster broke through the line of spears the men opened quickly to the right and left, there being five more behind them; but instead of keeping on the animal turned upon the leader, whose spear was in his shoulder. Those five men behind started quickly forward, but they would have been too late, for the lion was already in the air, and had his huge claws struck their mark the blow would surely have proved fatal. The coolness of my companions had given me new nerve, for it showed to me that our enemy was not invincible. My rifle was at my shoulder—I followed the lion's heart with my sight—and watched breathlessly for the moment when he should rest.

"With a sort of instinct I knew he would hesitate ere he made the death-spring. It must have been instinct, or intuition, for I knew little of his habits. And I was right. As he came face to face with the old man he stopped to gather himself for the spring. It was but a single instant,—in fact, it had been but little over a second since the shock. All that I have related took place within the space of one fair thought. I said he crouched for the spring. My eye had been upon the spot beneath which I supposed the heart must lie, and as this momentary rest came I fired.

"I said before that the lion was already in the air when the five men came up. So he was, but he had my bullet in his heart! One deep roar burst from his throat—the old man started upon one side—and the monster fell to the ground—dead! He did not even struggle. There was a quivering of the massive frame, and a sort of sinking of the sides. Then came a swelling of the lungs, a lifting of the ribs, and there was one deep gasp, almost a smothered roar, and the last spark was gone!

"With shouts and songs of joy the natives gathered about the fallen monster. They caressed me until I had to beg of Abdac to tell them to stop. A litter was formed of the stout spears, and the lion placed thereon; but the burden was too heavy to be conveyed thus, so we returned to the village, and sent out a couple of horses.

"That was my first lion hunt; but it was not my last."

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SCANDAL.

"Believe not each aspersing word,
As most weak persons do;
But still believe that story false
Which ought not to be true."

◆

AMUSING DUEL.

Baden-Baden, says the London Times, which has been so long one of the temples of folly, would seem—if the chronicles of the place which the newspapers supply may be trusted—to have taken a tone and temper at once moral and practical. The code of the gaming-table, is, apparently, falling from its authority, with the threatened deposition of the gaming-table itself. Two strangers, an Englishman and a Prussian, quarrelled, according to a very common incident, over their play, and agreed in the usual course to fire at one another, as the recognized means of settling a dispute. The Englishman was so lucky as to win the first fire, and so unlucky as to miss his adversary. The latter had only now to shoot his man at his ease, and prepared to take his aim accordingly, when the Englishman cried out, "Stop, stop—I'll buy your shot." The first impression made was that of the novelty of the proposal—the second, that it contained the preliminaries of a mutually profitable transaction. The conditions of the arrangement were accordingly entered upon; and the two leading elements were, that the Englishman was rich, and the Prussian a good shot. The redemption was valued at £1000, and the parties returned to the city, alike satisfied with their bargain. The case was worth reporting, and we are glad it was the Englishman who set the first example of this clear insight into the *rationale* of duelling.

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Devonshire Cure for Warts.—Take a piece of twine, tie it in as many knots as you have warts, touch each wart with a knot, and then throw the twine behind your back into some place where it may soon decay—a pond, or a hole in the earth. *But tell no one what you have done.* When the twine is decayed, your warts will disappear; without any pain or trouble—being, in fact, charmed away!

◆

To Revive a Fading Flower.—Cut the stalk, and hold it a few moments in the flame of the candle, and then set the flower again in the cold water, when it will recover its strength almost visibly after this violent assistance, and blossom imdiately.

◆

The Spider.—It is an oriental idea that the spider draws its venom from the rose; and thus it is that too often from the sweetest sources comes the blight of happiness and human affections.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Three Young Ladies.—You had better seek a cure for your "troubles" and "low spirits" in the kitchen and the wash-tub. Or perhaps a careful exploration of the house from garret to cellar, with a broom, would relieve your "depression of mind," if regularly followed up every morning. As to your questions about marriage and your property we answer yes; but the weddings had better be postponed until you can all "keep house" in the most practical and useful, as well as ornamental manner.

Karmel.—You cannot keep furniture left with you by another man, because he owes you, unless the furniture was pledged to secure the debt. You should sue the man, get a judgment against him, issue an execution and levy on the furniture, if it be of sufficient value to make it worth while.

Foot.—It is impossible to tell how much the Rothschilds are worth. It is quite possible that they could not tell themselves. Their enormous credit is their most valuable possession. If sold out under the hammer their assets would probably bring a much less sum than they are reputed to be worth.

S. E. Burr.—The Ledger is mailed to all our subscribers regularly on every Friday; but the news-offices are supplied earlier. Although our mail list is larger than that of any other literary and family paper in America, our news-office list is full seven times greater.

Charles A. M.—Your parents had better put you under the care of some experienced aurist, as such a tendency to deafness may eventuate in the total loss of your hearing.

A Lady Subscriber puts the following case: Suppose on coming out of church, a young lady discovers that it is raining slightly, and at the same time discovers a gentleman acquaintance in the vestibule, who speaks to her, remarks that it is raining, asks if she has an umbrella, is told that she has none, and then, after accompanying her to the sidewalk, politely touches his hat, wishes her good-day, and walks off under his umbrella, leaving her to make her way home in profound astonishment and the rain. The gentleman's reason for not offering to escort her home is that he was afraid of offending by offering her his services, as their acquaintance was but very slight, and he supposed she would ask him to protect her from the rain if she desired him to do so; on the other hand, the lady supposed he would and should volunteer his services as umbrella holder. Which is right? The lady is right. It is never improper for a gentleman to offer to do a lady a real, substantial service, where the necessity or desirableness of such service is unmistakeably apparent; but it might well be a most awkward thing for a lady to *ask* for help even when she exceedingly needed it.

A Stammerer writes us from Philadelphia that our advice to those afflicted with stammering, given in the Ledger of April 25th, has already been of great service to him. He has been troubled with this affliction from childhood, and has spent much money to gain a cure, but the benefits that have resulted from following the practice we recommended have already far exceeded those of all other tested remedies; and he wishes us to make this fact public in order that his fellow-sufferers may be encouraged at once to commence practicing the course we laid down in the Ledger of the date aforementioned. The advertisements of quacks, who promise "to cure stammering in an hour, without pain or fatigue to the patient," should be disregarded; or, at any rate, their fee should not be paid until they have performed the cure.

A Lady Reader says a young man called on her a short time since, and that after his departure she missed her daguerreotype which had been lying on the table. She suspected her visitor of having taken it, and on investigation learned that her suspicion was correct. She has several times asked for a return of the daguerreotype, but her requests have thus far been refused, and she wishes to know what she can do to regain her miniature? She should inform her father, or if she has no father, then some one who can act energetically for her, of the fact, and request him to get the daguerreotype; and if the purloiner refuses still to give it up, then make an affidavit of the facts of the case before a magistrate, and have him arrested for stealing the miniature. Such impudent meddling with other people's property should be severely punished.

Mrs. E. B. W.—A remedy for pimples on the face has been sent us, for the efficacy of which we cannot vouch, though it is highly commended. It is as follows, namely: Wash the face, just before going to bed, with sour milk or buttermik, and when dry rub it thoroughly with dry wheat flour. In the morning wash in soft cold water and rub vigorously with a coarse towel. In ten days, it is said, all signs of pimplification will disappear, and your mirror will reflect back a state of things of which you may be justly proud.

Coelebs.—Josephine was older than Napoleon. There would certainly be no harm in marrying a woman two or even six years older than yourself, if you loved her. Many of the happiest marriages have been those wherein the wife was the elder. There are scores, yes thousands of men who need not only a wife but a mother and guardian to keep them from making fools of and ruining themselves, and when these can all be united in the same woman it is a most fortunate circumstance—for the man.

A Brooklyn Apprentice Boy says his master and also the foreman of the establishment is in the habit of knocking down the boys employed therein, and kicking them in the stomach and face while they are down. One boy had his eyes nearly put out in this way, and often their faces are much disfigured. The question is, what can be done with these inhuman monsters? Be sure of your facts and that you can prove them, and then complain to a magistrate of their ill-treatment of yourself and your fellow-apprentices.

L. T. Anderson says he asked a friend what time it was and was answered, "The time past noon is equal to one-fifth of the time before midnight." He has been trying ever since to make out what the hour could have been, but he can't do it, and now he wants us to try to solve the problem and tell him what the solution is. Any boy who has studied and mastered vulgar fractions can tell him. It was two o'clock; at which time the two hours past noon are equal to one-fifth of the ten hours before midnight.

Henry.—Wait patiently until you shall have acquired your profession and got a fair start in business. By that time the young lady's father may discover how unjustly you have been aspersed and grant a gracious consent to your union with his daughter. If such a happy result be not attained you will at least then be in a position to act independently, and your experience will enable you also to act much more wisely then than now.

Annie Galena.—Every family must judge for itself whether or not it would be disgraced should one of its daughters go upon the stage. For our part, we would rather see a daughter of ours (if we had one) innocently sleeping the sleep that knows no waking, than have her become the familiar companion of those who frequent the green-rooms of theatres.

A Couple Once Lovers, who have come to the conclusion that they had better not marry, but still cherish mutual sentiments of friendship and esteem, wish to know if it would be proper for them to enter into a "friendly" correspondence with each other. Yes; let them correspond, and the matter will probably terminate in their marriage.

C. A. B.—Many people have learned to play the guitar without a teacher, and we know no reason why you could not do the same; you should be better able to determine that question than we are. Good teachers of the guitar in this city charge from $20 to $40 a quarter.

J. W. S.—Book-keepers get from $500 to $3000 a year in New York. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for a person who has never had practical experience as a book-keeper, to get a situation as one in a first-class house in this city.

O. H., of Newark, is desperately in love with a young lady, and he wants to know how he shall make her aware of the stupendous fact. The only way that strikes us, at present, to let her know it, is for O. H. to tell her of it.

A. B.—The way to get copies of the "reports" made by the different departments of the United States Government, is to apply for them to some member of Congress, or to officers in the department which make them.

Inquirer.—The term "quarantine" is said to have originated in the idea of the necessary purifications practised anciently, forty days, the Latin word being *quaranta.* This "institution" is of old date, having been introduced early in the fourteenth century. The first Lazaretto was erected in 1453, in Sardinia, and the second in 1468. The Venetian Republic organized a Board of Health in 1485, and in 1504 an infringement of sanitary regulations was punished with death. The system was introduced into England during the reign of Queen Anne, in 1710. In 1699 William Penn introduced the quarantine system in Philadelphia, and similar regulations were subsequently adopted in other American ports. By the present regulations quarantine is the time during which persons coming from a place where the plague or pestilential disease is, is obliged to remain on shipboard, or at the Lazaretto. The time may be more or less than forty days. During this time the ship and her crew are said "to perform quarantine," and are not permitted to be in any communication with the inhabitants of the place where they arrive. Such regulations much impede commerce, and many have questioned their utility; while, on the other hand, the introduction of contagious disease is so destructive to a community, that the quarantine regulations have found firm advocates in the medical faculty, as well as among legislators and enlightened individuals.

T. P. Q. took a lady with whom he was but slightly acquainted, and whose good opinion he values highly, to a saloon to get an ice-cream, and when he came to pay the bill he found to his utter consternation that he had left his purse in the pocket of his "other pantaloons," and the lady herself had to pay for the refreshments. T. P. Q. has been in despair ever since, and wants to know what he shall do? Why, man! laugh the matter off as a good joke, refund the lady the money you borrowed, and give her a nice bouquet or bracelet for the interest of the same. Such little mistakes often occur, and nothing is ever thought of them.

Lamartine.—If you find that you cannot love the lady to whom you are engaged, you would of course be unwise to marry her; but as the non-fulfilment of your engagement will certainly cause her much discomfort and unhappiness, and be apt to subject her to scandal and ridicule, you should of course make her every reparation in your power. You had no business to enter into such an engagement; but having done so, you must take the consequences of your own act.

Derry.—No; you have no right to pass over your neighbor's land against his wishes, no matter how great the convenience of such passage would be to you nor how much inconvenience the denial of such right of way may subject you to. As to the question whether or not long-continued custom has given you such a right of way, *that* can only be decided by a legal tribunal before which *all* the facts shall be set forth.

An Apprentice, who is unaccustomed to female society and correspondence, wishes to write to a young lady, but is at a loss how to commence his letter—whether to write "Dear M——," or "Dear Miss M——," or "My dear M——," or "Respected Miss," or *what.* In your first letter it would be proper to address her as "Madam;" and then let your terms grow more intimate as the correspondence progresses.

Emma.—Pennsylvania is called the "Keystone State" in a political sense, because she is of such great importance in a Presidential election, and also on account of the greatness of her material resources. Such appellations as the "Keystone State," the "Empire State," the "Old Dominion," etc., are harmless bits of assumption and egotism on the part of those who adopt them for their respective States.

Isabel.—We have no recollection of having received the letter to which you refer. A lady must exercise her own judgment as to whether she should cut the acquaintance of a gentleman with whom she had danced at a public festival. She would have a right to do so, if she did not wish the acquaintance to be continued.

Critical.—There is no valid reason in the nature of things why the unfortunate parentage of your sweetheart should occasion the non-fulfilment of your engagement with her. You say she is beautiful, accomplished, amiable, and would make you a good and loving wife; secure her then, by all means; such prizes are rare.

Hardwicke.—A gentleman should precede a lady in going up stairs and follow her going down. In case he meets a lady on the stairs, he should stand with his hat in his hand until she has passed; or, in these days of hooped petticoats, it would perhaps be safer for him to beat a retreat altogether.

Martha M. J—— should return to her friends. We are requested by her afflicted mother to state that her expenses will be paid, if she will do so. Young people should be careful how they jeopardize their own happiness, and that of their parents, by ill-conceived matches.

An Old Subscriber.—If your letter should be mailed at New Haven for New York, it would have to be prepaid at the former place, no matter where it came from thither. If, however, it were mailed at some foreign port, it would be subject to the rates prevalent at that port.

J. M. W.—The custom of a mercantile house would settle the form and style of address to be adopted by its clerks. The number of partners would have nothing to do with the use of the "we"; such a form would be proper if there was only one owner of the house.

Henry A.—Your memory can probably be strengthened by practice, just as any other faculty can, or as your muscles can be strengthened by exercise. There is no other way of improving it.

A Young Subscriber.—Kent's Commentaries is the first work usually read by law-students in this country. It would be better for you than Blackstone, though it would do you no harm to read both.

F. W. H. C.—We have often said, and still say, that we do not wish to engage any new contributors. That a person will write for the Ledger gratuitously is no inducement for us to engage him.

Iowa City.—It would be unlady-like and indelicate for a girl to take any steps to let a man know she loved him, before he had declared his love to her. You had better patiently await the developments of time.

Carolie.—The symptoms you mention are not those of coming insanity. You would do well however to refrain from reading and study for a while and take plenty of exercise. Consult also your family physician.

Lewis M.—It is impossible to make strangers or even friends look upon a personal grief with your eyes. You must simply bear your troubles as bravely as you can, and trust to time and Providence for their amelioration.

Carrie.—If a girl's lover *will not* accompany her to concerts, etc., she would not be blameworthy for going with her friends, and leaving him to mope in the chimney-corner alone.

Struggling Genius.—Such ailments of the voice and lungs as you speak of, are matters of too much importance to trifle or experiment with. You should secure the best medical advice you can obtain.

Highwayman.—Dick Turpin is no creation of fancy. He was a veritable villain who infested the precincts of London, and met his deserts at Tyburn many years ago.

C. H. H.—A "legal tender" of any sum is to offer to pay the amount in the lawful coin of the United States, according to the rules established by Congress.

Woodward.—Do not risk your eyesight by resorting to any advertised remedies for sore eyes, but consult some physician in whom you have confidence.

A Little Boy.—It is always impolite to answer "What?" when addressed. You should reply "Sir," or Madam," as the case may be.

Miss M. W.—We are much obliged for your partiality to the Ledger, but must respectfully decline engaging any new contributors.

Canada West.—We do not insert matrimonial advertisements in the Ledger however skilfully they may be disguised.

Two "Grass Widows" are hereby informed that we do not care to answer questions concerning matters which are a disgrace to their sex.

J. C. B., Middlebury, O.—By writing to the Commissioner of Patents at Washington you can probably get copies of some of the reports of that department.

E. H. F., Utica.—The words of the song "Sweet Home" were written by John Howard Payne, who died several years since. The air itself is an old Sicilian melody.

Jenkinsville.—We believe that in Massachusetts a party cannot get a divorce for "desertion" until the expiration of five years from the time the desertion took place.

Young America.—You can get the Ledgers containing the last five installments of "The Storm Secret," by sending us twenty cents.

G. A. C.—The story to which you refer—"The Gunner's Shot"—is an old affair, and has been going the rounds of the papers both in this country, and in England, for several years.

H. K.—A corporation, whether municipal or otherwise, can not take the real estate of a person for its own use without remunerating him for the same.

Nicholasville.—You can get the Ledger as far back as June 7th, 1856, immediately, by sending us $2 as you propose. The postage will be half a cent on each copy.

Frederick, Westfield. We do not take subscriptions for less than a year.

O. T. J.—You are right. The Ledger has been published some twelve years; it was originally a business paper.

W. W. C.—There is no remedy for "hair growing down on the forehead?" What harm is there in letting it grow?

Orlando.—If we remember aright, the population of London is now estimated at two and a half millions.

E. W.—No person has a right to republish any of our copy-righted stories; nor will we permit any one to do so.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*